

SECRET HISTORY
OF THE
FRENCH REVOLUTION,
FROM THE
CONVOCAATION OF THE NOTABLES IN 1787
TO THE
FIRST OF NOVEMBER 1796.

CONTAINING
A vast Number of PARTICULARS but little known;
together with EXTRACTS of the most remarkable
PUBLICATIONS on the REVOLUTION, which have
appeared in FRANCE, GERMANY, and ENGLAND.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
FRANCIS PAGÈS.

Tyrans, tremblez ; l'Histoire va vous juger même vivans.

IN TWO VOLUMES,

VOL. I.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR T. N. LONGMAN, PATERNOSTER-ROW,
AND J. MATHEWS, STRAND.

1797.

X

1560/955.



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INTRODUCTION.

THE present period will hold a distinguished rank in history. No nation has presented to view an event of so colossal a magnitude. North America presents an astonishing picture in its early manhood, and in the rapidity of that movement by which it has, in less than ten years, passed through those periods which require ages in the ordinary developement of empires ; but this picture is by no means so glowing, so varied, so instructive with regard to virtue or vice, as that which the French revolution exhibits. No pallet however rich, no colours however brilliant, no touch however strong, can depict that train of events which almost universally border on prodigy, and which have succeeded each other in so rapid, and generally in so alarming a manner ; those sudden and terrible commotions which have often threatened to overwhelm France, and which continue to convulse all Europe. The pencil of a Tacitus, or the genius of a Livy, are necessary to equal such a subject.

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The most celebrated events in the history of the world, whose face they have entirely changed, those miracles of human exertion, which have been often but monuments of human crime, those instances of the greatness and the infamy of man, can none of them be compared to what has passed before our eyes. These reflections have often caused the pen to drop from my hand; but though I have not deceived myself with regard to the truly Herculean task of writing this History, motives of a more powerful nature have incited me to the attempt. I felt that every citizen owed to his country the tribute of his opinions, and that silence would be a crime at a moment when the constituent principles of a state, after so many vibrations, begin to find solidity and permanence; at a moment when every mind is attracted toward that interesting branch of philosophy which teaches the art of government; at a moment, in short, when the revolution of the 9th Thermidor (July 27) gives us the permission, or at least the hope, of writing what conscience dictates. The press seems at present freed from the ignominious slavery by which it was debased; and the time is at length come to give ourselves up to all our courage and energy. The executioners of Thought and Genius have
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in part perished, and can no longer paralyse the pen of the historian; those that still exist are fortunately invested with a less degree of power. Under the domination of tyrants men must repress their thoughts, restrain their tongues, chain down every effort of the soul, and condemn to silence every sentiment. Thus it was not till the first respite from tyranny, that the immortal Tacitus avenged the cause of mankind and of virtue. Assuredly this history could not have been written with any utility in a time when liberty was nothing but licentiousness, when courage was danger, when sensibility was a crime, when virtue was a sentence of death. Could any advantage be expected at a period when a band of tyrants, armed with a colossal popularity, and supported by thousands of subaltern agents, proscribed and even slaughtered virtuous citizens with the sword of the law? How could reason and truth be restored to their legitimate ascendancy in the absence of every virtuous sentiment? Wretches! they were not content with assassinating—they endeavoured to rob their victims of the robe of innocence, by observing in their murders a mockery of the judicial form; they perverted the public mind; they changed a polished nation into a nation of Vandals, a mild people into a people of cannibals. There
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are opinions, there are extravagances of barbarism which are more destructive than the most epidemic pestilence. Such have been, for the most part, the frantic doctrines propagated by our oppressors.

Now that the French nation resumes its former sentiments; now that every thing seems to breathe an unusual benevolence and humanity, except in a few departments which are yet a prey to anarchy and civil discord; now that the terrorists of all parties seem to be reduced to a fortunate state of impotence, we may hope to succeed in impressing on the public mind the great and immutable principles of social order, and the maxims which alone can preserve a state. At the present day benevolent writings may be composed, writings very different from those inflammatory publications which are stained with blood, and which preach systems of murder. Thus the mild light of philosophy, and the affecting accents of humanity, will doubtless penetrate every mind; and will eventually unite all men in a similarity of moral and political opinions.

Alas! why can we not tear from the History of our Revolution those sad and shocking pages
7 which

which are marked with the crimes of the assassins? Why can we not cast a veil over the enormities of those men whose profession was murder, and who rioted at once in gold and in blood? Happily the revolution presents us, on the other hand, instances of real patriotism, actions truly heroic, which afford a repose and a recreation to the mind when wearied with the recital of so many horrors.

The historian of the revolution cannot free himself from the painful task which is imposed on him. He cannot omit any of the enormities committed by the tyrants or their infamous agents: if they thirsted for crimes, we thirst for justice; we must inflict upon them all the severity of historical truth; we must hurl against the wicked the thunderbolts of public opinion, that universal conscience which meanness and cowardice cannot brave with impunity. History ought to seize them with her iron arm, and drag them before the tribunal of posterity. Whatever description she may give of these men of blood, she cannot be accused of calumny: alas! the disastrous times in which we have lived cannot be calumniated; no language is forcible enough to characterise them; our tyrants have covered

France with a robe of blood, and their example would have induced a belief that the globe was only formed for error and for crime.

In fine, shall I confess it? my soul, filled with indignation and with suffering, has need to communicate its sensations. I yield to the force of my feelings, to that desire for the public welfare with which I am inflamed; my heart is open to all the children of misfortune; it is to avenge them that I call to mind thoughts so distressing, recollections so mournful. At this idea my imagination takes fire; a sacred indignation boils in my veins. Yes, I will paint you in your true colours, ye sanguinary excitors of anarchy! you, who opposing our passage toward liberty, forged for us an immeasurable chain of evils, and prepared an endless series of calamities. I do not fear splitting upon the rock of prejudice, for it is impossible to transmit half of your crimes to posterity. And is it not just that they who have drunk the last drop in the cup of crime should be forced to drink the last dregs of infamy?

I have neglected nothing to render this history as complete as possible. We have reviewed all
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the grand questions, those of the powers, of the *veto*, of the reformation of the code, of the abolition of nobility, &c. &c. and to these we have prefixed an account of the ancient States-General, which was scarcely remembered but by tradition. We have enriched this history with the most interesting observations contained in the different productions, French, English, and German, to which the revolution has given birth. We have also been greatly assisted both by private informations, relative to affairs of the present times, from persons who have been connected with the government, and by the different histories which have already appeared, and which contain most of the events of the two first years of the revolution. We have not found the same assistance in an History of the Revolution lately published by Fantin Desoart, which is so incorrect as to assert that the massacres of the 2d of September were paid by Mirabeau, who died a long time before that event. We have not forgotten the Arts and Sciences, whose history is, in our opinion, far more interesting than that of the crimes committed by ambition, interest, and pride.

Never had any work a more moral or more useful object, than that which results from the

History of our Revolution. The reader will be convinced that society cannot subsist without obedience to the laws; that when they are overlooked or trampled on, society falls to ruin amidst a thousand calamities public and private; that licentiousness is nothing but a hatred of human nature, and of human laws; that anarchy is a more destructive and persecuting scourge than despotism itself; that none but a moral and enlightened people should dare to be free; that knowledge is the most powerful check on tyrants; that the press has always been the most formidable weapon against them; and that the freedom of publication is, in spite of its abuses, the firmest support of a good government. It will be seen that men must be just, if they would not be miserable; that the fundamental laws of all governments should be laid in the eternal principles of morality and reason; that political and public law are only branches of morality; that they consist neither in the arts of dissimulation, nor in those of oppression; that there should always be a perfect union between moral and political truths, between laws and manners, between opinion and government; that innovations in legislation should be introduced as gradually and as insensibly as possible; that great calamities are the

the necessary consequence of great faults ; that the fanaticism of liberty is as terrible in its excess as the fanaticism of religion ; that the influence of demagogues is the most intoxicating and the most fatal ; that the multitude, when elevated to power, is the most cruel of tyrants ; that the temerity and licentiousness of popular assemblies ends in the subversion of the state ; that to pardon crimes is to punish innocence ; that the weapons of the wicked and the ambitious recoil upon themselves ; that crime leads from abyss to abyss ; and that vice imbibes destruction from its own venom. No, never would a despot exist, never would there be agitators and anarchists, if they would reflect on the consequences of their madness, and on the enormous weight of public vengeance, which is ready to burst upon their heads.

- We have freed this history from the load of details ; and have confined our attention to objects of real importance, and truths of utility. The historian must contemplate the mass of events, and must draw from it a general result. If he sometimes stoops to private anecdotes, it is not on account of their presenting features which would excite the curiosity or the malignity of mankind,

mankind, but because they contain a great lesson, or serve to mark more distinctly the features of a leading character, the appearance of the celebrated personage, when, in short, they show virtue in all its beauty, vice in all its deformity.

Adoring with enthusiasm that true liberty which is founded upon the law, idolizing that moral beauty which is not imaginary but real, and still glowing with the emotions of our revolution, I have not been able to resist the desire of describing its events. I shall boldly offer all those reflections which appear to me conducive to the amelioration of the government. I tread on uncertain ground, and I see all the danger of my undertaking; but without trembling, without balancing for an instant my own perils against what I owe to truth. One party is inclined to royalism, another is attached to the most unlimited and visionary democracy; these are for an upper house of legislation and the English constitution, those for an executive power with a president for life. One views the revolution only through a veil, another with the unfaithful prism of personal interest, of ignorance, or of prejudice. I am perfectly conscious that to gain
applause,

applause, a work must be devoted to party. I shall at once displease the aristocrat and democrat, the men of intemperate imaginations, and those who style themselves moderate; but I shall say, with the German author, Brandes, "He who displeases at once the opposite parties, may conclude that he is very near the truth."

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INTRODUCTION.

...a work must be devoted to party.
I shall at once identify the author and
demonstrate the man of independent imagination
and the man who is not himself moderate;
but I shall not, with the American author, Channing,
in the same degree, at once the opposite
of party, may conclude that he is very near
the truth.

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SECRET HISTORY

OF THE

FRENCH REVOLUTION.**BOOK I.**

*Historical View of the French Government, and
of the States-General, under the First Dynasty.*

FROM the very commencement of society, mankind have groaned under the weight of despotism. The history of human revolutions is only a recital of the usurpations of power, the revolt of reason, and the vengeance of the most powerful. In all the nations of the earth oppression has produced a forcible reaction, and this reaction has given birth to revolution. Every where has violence wearied out the patience of the oppressed; for, in fact, the people possess but a certain portion of patience. Every where, men who have been slaves become savage beasts; and then they surpass even their despots in fury, and resemble tygers broken loose from their

their chains *. In all climates, anarchy and disorder have been the consequences of the explosions occasioned by excessive oppression, and have only been terminated, after a bloody contest, either by the triumph of liberty, or by re-establishing that empire of despotism which succeeding events must ultimately destroy. If we attentively pursue the history of all despotic governments, we shall behold them describe an uniform circle of oppression, misery, lethargy, despair, rebellion, deposition, and massacre. So true is it, that despotism, by shedding the blood of the people, instructs them, in their turn, to strike their tyrants.

What nation ever revolted against its governors, until it had been trampled on by them? Was it not the tyranny of the Arabs which excited the Spaniards to shake off their yoke? Did not Holland owe its liberty to the oppression of Philip II.? Would not the Swedes have been at this moment languishing in the cave of Dalecarlia, if the Kings of Denmark had more cautiously displayed the banner

* Switzerland alone deserves an exception truly honorable: satisfied with the expulsion of Landenberg and his accomplices, that people secured to themselves liberty, without the expence of a single drop of blood.

of arbitrary power? Was it not from the depths of the most hideous slavery that the Swiss arose to the dignity of men? Did not the revolt of North America proceed from the insulting domination of the mother country?

In like manner, it was because France had been oppressed, harassed, wrung, and tortured with still greater shamelessness and insolence by an arbitrary and absolute government, that she advanced with giant steps to the vindication of her rights. A people, the most blindly vain of their ancient chains, has broken them with the greatest rage and impetuosity; has given to despotism the most terrible shock that it ever received from any nation. The history of its tyrants is necessarily connected with that of the revolution which destroyed their tyranny. Posterity must know to what a degree, and by what means, the sufferings of the people were for fourteen centuries progressively aggravated. It is necessary to trace the despotism through all its vestiges; and thus the History of the French Revolution necessarily reascends to the first ages of the monarchy.

It is at the very birth of royalty that the Iliad of our woes begins. We must, therefore,

dive into the obscurity of that distant period, in order to bring to light the first scenes of that long and terrible drama of public and private suffering, whose last acts, we may well hope, have been presented in our revolution. The vast picture which I am about to unfold to the eyes of the reader ought to be considered in one point of view; we ought to follow, through the whole of its extent, the chain of events which have successively developed the principles of government, the national manners, and the errors arising from each of these sources; events which have finally produced those decisive commotions to which empires owe their regeneration or their final destruction, and without which they would be for ever lost in the impenetrable gloom of despotism. Is it not also interesting to find, in studying the first ages of our monarchy, the germ of our national liberties, to discover the sparks of that sacred fire which, having lain a long while almost extinct, has on a sudden burst forth with redoubled splendor? Is it not instructive to pursue, in idea, those times of glory and of misfortune, of disgrace and of renown? What more pleasing spectacle can there be, than to contemplate from his rising in the horizon that sun of social justice, whose rays, though long obscured by the most gloomy clouds,

clouds, will progressively illuminate every part of the globe? The people have long been excluded from history, as they were from the palaces of tyrants: it is time to teach men under what governments and under what laws they have been greatest and most happy; then only shall we be able to dissipate those political prejudices which are the strongest bonds of slavery.

The History of France describes the nation of the ancient *Franks*, our ancestors, as forming four different classes; the nobles, the freemen, the liberated slaves, and the bondsmen. To these we ought to add the clergy, and we may at the same time subtract the freemen. The priests and the nobles enjoyed all the advantages of the social union; whilst the rest of the nation, even the very soldiers, were but their slaves. All were subject at one time to a king, at another to a prince, sometimes to dukes. The power of all these sovereigns was very great, but always limited. The first national assemblies were held at Seltz in Lower Alsace, in the year 422. The Salic law was there decreed and committed to writing: Pharamond confirmed it in 424, in a general assembly of the States. It was only made with re-

lation to the Salic lands, which were noble fiefs, given by our first Kings to the *Salians*, that is, the great Lords of their Hall* or Court. Clovis assembled the States in 499 for the establishment of Christianity: at that time they deliberated in the *Champ de Mars*, since called *Champ de Mai*, on war and peace; they occupied themselves with the reformation of abuses, with justice, with finance, in short, with all the branches of Government. The great lords and the bishops were summoned to the monarch's council, but they were only depositaries of a power which emanated from him. At this time the distinction between military and civil offices entirely disappeared; so that the government was purely military.

Clotaire II. held a kind of parliaments or ambulatory assemblies, named *Placita*, from whence is derived the word *Pleas*. Sole master of the monarchy after the civil wars which took place under the children of Clovis, he gave to the government that disastrous and despotic tendency which hastened the ruin of the first race. Having usurped the inheritance of his nephews, and having murdered a Queen, at that time famous, he beheld the power of the

* *Salle. Fr.*

mayors

mayors of the palace, who had been the accomplices of his crimes, rapidly increase. He was obliged to suffer, and to grant every thing. From that moment the Royal Pleas became a more numerous assembly, and consequently they soon manifested tumult and licentiousness. Historians have confounded these assizes or pleas with the review of the *Champ de Mars*; but it is certain that the King summoned or excluded whomsoever he chose.

The descendants of Clovis soon possessed no more than the shadow of royalty; the sceptre was really in the hands of the mayors of the palace. Amongst these mayors the most distinguished was Pepin, who had been prime minister to several successive infant kings, and who, having the command of the armies, and uniting all the qualities of the warrior and statesman, easily assumed the royal dignity. The revolution which placed on the throne Pepin, father of Charles Martel, and grandfather to Charlemagne, was unfortunate only to the reigning family. It could not but be, as in fact it was, indifferent to an enslaved and oppressed people, whether they were governed by absolute mayors, under indolent kings, or by the new Dynasty, in which one of those mayors became king himself.

Let us pause a moment at this epoch, and make some essential reflections on the Government, and the States-General or National Assemblies of the first ages of the monarchy. We see that the monarchy was originally elective, and afterwards hereditary; that there were assemblies in which the great men of the nation seem to have concurred with the chief in the formation of laws; but the great men were not the whole nation, nor the representatives of its authority. As to the *Tiers-Etat* *, they were not mentioned. It is, therefore, an exaggeration of the historians to say, that the legislative power resided in the collective body of the citizens. Religion, or rather a most pusillanimous and degrading superstition, was, in those days of ignorance and military despotism, the only bulwark of the people; at the same time that it was an engine in the hands of the clergy, or of the first ambitious man who could attach them to his interest, to plunge the state into all the horrors of a civil war, or to bind the nation in chains at his pleasure. The French character was at that time a mixture of that of the Goths, Visigoths, Burgundians, Lombards, Saxons, Sicambrians, Bructerians, and Alans, who, having formerly

* Third Estate, or Commons.

associated

associated under the name of the *Franks*, or *Free League*, had laid in the two Gauls the first foundations of the French empire. In those unhappy times, and under those ignominious reigns, man was degraded, and land was ennobled. Such was the origin of that feudal system, whose consequences we shall soon have occasion to observe. France had no written constitution. The authority of the Merovingian * Kings was very limited : and if we suppose that the legislative power resided in the general assembly of the *Champ de Mars*, this assembly was nothing but a camp, and the soldiers were the nation. The assembly was afterwards less regularly convoked ; the king consulted the nobles, instead of the nation ; and the military democracy was changed into an aristocracy. Subsequently to this, the kings drew to themselves the whole authority ; and thus the aristocracy became an absolute and arbitrary monarchy. It is, nevertheless, easy to recognize, in the first general assemblies, the germ of French liberty, and to behold the beaming of its early dawn in the right of electing the kings, and in the admission of a part of the nation to a share in the legislative power.

* The first race, so called from Merovæus, the grandfather of Clovis.

BOOK II.

*History of the Government and States-General
under the Second Dynasty.*

CHARLEMAGNE who eclipsed Pepin and Charles Martel, Charlemagne, compared with whom the name of Louis XIV. sinks into oblivion, seemed to have acquired a right to that throne of which he proved himself worthy, by surrounding it with glory, justice, and happiness. He restored in great part to the nation the legislative authority, an authority which, if fully analysed, can only be found to include the right and the power of constraining men to be just, and to follow those rules which protect persons and property. The people participated in it, for the first time; but without as yet composing an order in the state. They had twelve representatives for each county. This assembly of legislation, composed of three bodies, the clergy, the nobility, and the people, was divided into three chambers, each of which discussed its own affairs separately; and the Monarch never appeared there, unless when his presence was requested, for he wished the assembly to contain within itself the principle of its movement. He
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also formed provincial assemblies, and projected the municipal administration; but these useful institutions were rendered ineffectual by the weakness and imbecility of his successors. The concessions extorted from Louis the *Debonair*, and from Charles the *Bald*, by the clergy and nobility, undermined the supreme authority, at the same time that they depressed the people. There remained only lords and *villains*, masters and servants.

The admirable plan of administration established by Charlemagne contained, however, a destructive error, that of a confusion between two powers, which cannot be too completely separated, but which he permitted to exist together in the same persons,—the power of arms, and that of the civil magistracy. This disorder did not cease until after the destruction of the feudal system.

The children of Charlemagne were at once weak, unjust, and cruel. France was deluged with blood; and Charles the *Bald*, their successor, gave the last blow to the authority of the government, by joining extreme injustice to extreme weakness. He was to the second race what Clotaire II. was to the first. The great

lords elevated themselves upon the ruins of the throne. New crimes replunged France into new disasters. The vengeance of Heaven seemed to pursue the blood of the parricidal children of Louis the Debonair. In less than seven years, seven princes of a House, no less unfortunate than that of the Stuarts, successively perished. Their successors, down to Louis the *Idle*, were neither more just nor more fortunate; and the sceptre of Charlemagne at length passed from the hands of his descendants into those of Hugh Capet, one of the most powerful vassals of the crown.

The national spirit of France, together with its constitution, was almost wholly lost amidst so many excesses and oppressions, followed by so much weakness. There were no more general laws, no more capitulars; but the people were subjected to customs no less barbarous than absurd, according as the petty despot who governed them was more or less capricious, more or less tyrannical. It is to this species of administration, that the name of a *feudal government* has been affixed.

We see that the States-General varied, according to the predominant spirit of each age, each reign
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under which they existed. The army almost entirely composed them under the first race; the church directed them during the second. Clovis consulted and paid a deference to the sword by which he had conquered, as Pepin did to the sanctuary which authorized his usurpation; we shall presently behold Philip the *Handsome* add to this oracle, an oracle of a different kind, and strengthen himself with a new support, the Parliaments.

BOOK III.

History of the Government and States-General under the Third Dynasty, to the Reign of Louis XIV.

THE race of Charlemagne was extinct; and even before it had ceased to exist, Hugh Capet had received the crown from the hands of his peers. He owed it to his sword, to the affections of the nobles, and to the extent of his domains. Here begins another order of things, or rather the subversion of all social order. The nation became the prey of a crowd of nobles, that is to say, of robbers, who exhausted

hausted every drop of its bloody and pressed out its vital juices by a thousand methods. The relative weakness of these petty tyrants subjected them in their turn to one more elevated tyrant. Such was the origin of the *mesne* fiefs, and of the system of vassalage. The people supported all the action and reaction of these different powers. Hugh Capet and his successors no longer convened the nation; and there were only two orders, the clergy and the nobility. In matters of general government there existed no union between the monarch and his vassals; each of whom looked on himself as sovereign in his own territory. There remained, however, two laws of the ancient constitution, which the revolution had not abolished: the one was, the homage which still represented the oath of fidelity due to the king from all his officers; the other was, the right of appeal, which rendered the monarch judge of all the injuries committed by his vassals: these two laws finally produced a revival of the others; so important is it to preserve the traces of useful laws. This brings us to the reign of Louis VI. the first king of the third race that felt himself sovereign of all France, and not of one or two classes of men. The abbot Suger made him comprehend that the fewer were his slaves, the more numerous would be

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be his subjects, and that this was the only barrier to oppose against the nobles, who had already become the rivals of the throne. These considerations made him establish the *communes*, and enfranchise all the inhabitants of towns.

Louis the *Pat* sold to the *villeins* and *serfs** of his domains their freedom; he gave them the rights of burghesses, and of having a mayor and sheriffs. The municipal government of towns and boroughs, the most paternal of all kinds of administration, was now seen to revive. The nobles, who, at the time of the Crusades, wanted money for their voyage into distant regions, made similar bargains, and thus the Crusades at least contributed to the liberty of the people.

The reign of Philip Augustus is one of the most brilliant epochs of the monarchy. France rose once more to the rank of the primary powers, a rank from which she had been excluded ever since the time of Charlemagne. The ordinance which Philip Augustus published in 1190, and which was the first act of general legislation passed under the third race, is one of the most precious records of our history. He

* Bondsmen or Slaves.

judged

judged and punished his vassals himself. At this time the Court of Peers began to shew itself in all its splendor.

Louis IX. called Saint Louis, was still greater than his grandfather Philip Augustus; he united the empire of wisdom with that of policy. His characteristics were, justice and valour. The Italian system of false and narrow policy, which only arose under Charles VIII. had not yet poisoned the springs of government. Saint Louis was the arbiter of kings; because they regarded him as incapable of deceit. His institutions are the first body of laws, which served to shock the barbarism of the ancient jurisprudence. Under the immediate successors of this prince, the royal jurisdiction was still more strengthened. The King's Court, which, under the name of *Parliament*, had always accompanied the monarch, became a fixed tribunal. Thither were carried all the causes of the vassals: and the Court of Peers was naturally placed amidst these judicial proceedings.

It was not until the reign of Philip the Fair, in 1302, that the people really formed an order in the state, in consequence of the quarrels of that prince with the Pope. It was also in his reign,

reign, in the year 1314, that the taxes were granted by the three orders. Subsequently to this period the parliaments caused the States-General to be forgotten, by performing the functions of that body themselves. The true representatives had no longer either jurisdiction, or right of suffrage in matters of legislation. They were only allowed to present complaints and petitions. The king alone possessed the legislative authority, or at least seemed to share it with a body composed of his own officers. The *Sovereign*, that is to say, the Nation, acted the part of a subject and suppliant; whilst the king performed the functions, and exercised the rights of that sovereignty of which he was only the agent. The prodigal Philip, as a mean of procuring himself resources, projected the renewal and frequent convocation of the States-General, whose assemblage had scarcely any other object, down to that of 1614, and we may add that of 1789, than to obtain subsidies. Never have we seen the States-General of France assembled without an augmentation of the royal finances. The parliament have been still more ready to sacrifice the people. These bodies formed by degrees an aristocracy, nay a real tyranny in the state.

Louis X. surnamed *Hutin*, rendered himself for ever famous, by that celebrated law in which

he declares, that, Nature having made all men free, and his kingdom being called the kingdom of the *Franks* *, he resolves, that his subjects shall be free in reality as well as in name. He published also another law no less admirable, but unfortunately neglected, in which it was declared, that neither he nor his successors should in future levy any subsidy, without the consent of the three orders.

In the reign of Philip de Valois, arose that famous contest, in which two princes asserted their opposing claims to the throne, relying equally on the Salic law. The meaning of that law is now indisputable. Edward III. irritated by this dispute, seized every opportunity of gratifying his ambition and resentment. Thus began that long rivalship between France and England, a rivalship which has occasioned the shedding of oceans of blood. The captivity of King John reduced France to the last extremity. All would have been lost, if the kingdom had been still in the same state in which it was under Hugh Capet; but the nobles, now more enlightened, felt that the monarchy was a body which needed a head, and that their own interests were linked with those of the monarchy.

* Free men.

The fiefs had by degrees become hereditary, a great and lamentable fault of our ancestors! An hereditary nobility is one of the most destructive evils of a state, and one of the greatest obstacles to the liberty of a nation. This intermediate body is less dangerous, perhaps, it is even useful in a monarchy: yet the examples of Louis XI., Richelieu, and Louis XIV. sufficiently prove that it is not a sufficient barrier against despotism. The kings even found it very difficult to restrain their great vassals, and did not succeed in the attempt until after a considerable length of time, by the re-union of several great fiefs to the crown. The government was nearly the same under Charles the *Wise*; but the reign of Charles VI. whose insanity occasioned a long regency, exemplified the fatal consequences resulting from the divisions of princes, the ambition of nobles, and the weakness of the sovereign. Nothing more fully proves that the absolute power of an individual is less formidable to the people than a crowd of tyrants, whom no power can restrain within due bounds.

Every kind of crime ascended the throne, with Louis XI.; he converted the Bastille and the Castle of Plessis-les-tours into the receptacles, or rather the tombs of his victims. In his old age

he fell a prey to all the terrors, all the remorse, all the anguish of a mind at once weak and savage, barbarous and superstitious. He died more miserably than Nero, or Charles IX., and in those torments that every tyrant ought to feel.

The reign of Francis I. more especially contributed, though at a distance, to the regeneration of the French nation, by the revival of letters. The spirit of literature produced the spirit of philosophy, to which succeeded the spirit of legislation. The States-General, which were held at Tours, had already consecrated the deposit of public liberty; these States-General were the most memorable of all those assembled previous to 1789. The deplorable reigns which followed that of Francis I., even to the latter years of Louis XIV., offer only sad examples of all the evils to which fanaticism gives birth. Even the revolution of 1789 presents, in that respect, a very afflicting spectacle. It was under Francis I. and his successor Henry II., that those wars commenced, which are called the wars of religion; but which, according to the reflection of J. J. Rousseau, ought rather to be denominated the wars of priests. The ambition of the nobles contributed not a little to fan the flame of those

those civil wars which desolated the kingdom until the reign of Henry IV. Since the re-union of the great fiefs to the crown, the feudal government had ceased to exist, or, at least, to be dangerous; but if the lords were no longer a kind of sovereigns, they still possessed far too great a portion of power. They caused all the troubles of the *League**, and that long war in which the one half of France slaughtered the other half, in which a king, instinctively ferocious in the flower of his age, as the tiger is ferocious at his birth, sacrificed in one night, at the instance of a queen no less barbarous than himself, a hundred thousand of his subjects. This monarch, unworthy the name of man, died a death no less terrible than premature. Catherine de Medicis ended her days in a state of neglect, of oblivion, and of insignificance, which could not but be the severest punishment to a mind burning with ambition. Fredegonde and Brunehaut, those scourges of France, had not a more enviable lot. Such was nearly the end of Isabella of Bavaria; such also the destiny of the Dutchess of Angoulême, mother of Francis I.; and the Medicis of our days, Marie-Antoinette,

* The name given to the powers associating against Henry III. and IV.

experienced no less a degree of suffering. Here we cannot avoid making the reflection, that wherever women have had too great an influence, they have contributed much more than men to the subversion of empires; and their sex has appeared more cruel in proportion to its weakness. Madame de Chevreuse set more springs in motion, and effected more mischief, than Cardinal de Retz; in England the factions of Westminster were animated by the Countess of Carlisle; the league had in vain sought means to assassinate Henry III.; Madame de Montpensier, sister of the Guises, caused the project to be executed by a Monk; the Dutchess of Venneuil, a forsaken mistress of Henry IV., conspired against him, and he fell a victim to her revenge; in Turkey the revolutions of the seraglio, which produce those of the empire, are generally directed by a sultana.

Sully, under Henry IV. resisted the avidity of the nobles; and the victories of that monarch prepared their downfall. Richelieu, under Louis XIII., completed the destruction of their power. The government became firm and vigorous; but, at the same time, despotic. The revolt of the nobles was only ridiculed at the

the time of the *Fronde* *. By degrees the lofty prejudice of honor took place of the no less lofty prejudice of chivalry, and the age of Louis XIV. commenced.

We have passed with rapidity over the times of oppression, and of civil discord; in short, the times of carnage and of death, during which the voice of the nation was unheard. We will only recur to those mournful periods, in order to recall the memory of the celebrated Bodin. Had it depended on him, France would have been saved at the states of Blois. This incorruptible man, the soul and the support of the third estate, has, as yet, no statue, whilst statues of brass are erected to men covered with blood and mire! Doubtless the National Assembly will one day make amends for this neglect.

Here the reader ought to elevate himself, with us, to a height from whence he may survey at once the ages which we have reviewed; he ought to call to mind by what degrees nations become civilized, by what means governments are strengthened, and legislation purified. We have seen that the passions destroyed what the

* *La Fronde* was the term applied to Cardinal de Retz and his factious adherents.

passions had erected, and that bodies of men, like individuals, lose their power by an abuse of power. It must also have been observed, that from the time of Louis XIII., and during his reign, there existed no longer any distinction of powers, but that they were all confounded in the person of the monarch. The government, after having passed from the aristocracy of the military to that of the nobles, was changed into an absolute monarchy. The people made no acquisition of liberty, but lived under a different police. Internal peace was more certain, external war more vigorous. The poor and despised multitude saw, however, with satisfaction, the subjection of the powerful orders, and they even seemed for a time to feel themselves more at ease under the government of a sole monarch. The ministerial despotism did not press in so direct a manner upon the people, until the latter part of the reign of Louis XIV., and under the dominion of his successors.

BOOK IV.

History of the Government and States-General under Louis XIV., under the Regent, and under Louis XV.

LOUIS XIV. ascended the throne at the moment when the civil wars had elevated the minds of men to the highest degree of energy. His reign became an epoch in the annals of the world. The French nation found a recompence for their slavery in the splendor of their conquests, in the charms of the fine arts, and in all the pleasures of luxury and opulence. The thirst of gold began to predominate over the other passions. Louis XIV. had two desires equally insatiable, the love of pomp and the love of power. Under his reign the honest simplicity of our forefathers was exchanged for avaricious ostentation. The extravagance of Louis XIV. and his Court first opened that abyfs in which France is at this moment plunged; but marks of grandeur were observable even in his profusion. He was pardoned, because he was great, and because the nation yet remembered the chains of feudalism, and the horrors of the civil wars. The nation like him, and with him, was intoxicated by his successes; but,

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at least, it was an intoxication of glory ; since glory, according to the prejudices of the times, consisted in the barbarous and destructive folly of conquests. The infatuation of resolving to give laws to Europe devoted him to interminable war ; and he forgot that no war can be just that is not inevitable. The support of his vast armies exhausted the royal treasury ; and both the monarch and the nation finally expiated forty years of false glory, by all the sufferings and humiliations attendant on disgrace and defeat. Colbert had augmented the public revenue ; and caused, at the same time, commerce, science, and the arts to flourish. It is to him that France owes the great resources which will enable her to regain her strength ; I mean the rich manufactures of Lyons, of Tours, of Nîmes, of Vanrobais, Sedan, Louviers, and Elbœuf ; that of the Gobelins, that of the looking-glasses. But when we think of the dragooning, and of the religious massacres of Cevennes, when we think of so many virtuous and peaceful citizens, imprisoned, plundered, persecuted, slaughtered, without distinction of age or sex, we behold nothing but the open outrages of a most barbarous and impolitic despotism, and of a fanatical madness the most terrible that ever disgraced a government. The north of Europe was

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was enriched by our losses, and the kingdom was within an hair's-breadth of ruin. Louis the *Great*, who has been deified for above a century, was lavish of the blood of his soldiers, and of the sweat of his people. He was also vindictive and cruel; in defiance of the law of nations, he caused a foreigner, an unfortunate Dutch journalist, to be carried off, and made him expiate an offence against his pride by a confinement of eleven years in an iron cage, where his gouty feet were gnawed by the rats. He introduced a degrading servitude, in place of the openness of ancient manners, and of that elevation of sentiment which, in the time of Henry IV., distinguished the national character. Richelieu had already begun to introduce courtier-like habits,

The regent seems to have surpassed Louis XIV. himself in audaciousness, folly, and profusion. The latter for a long while made the nation respected; but the regency degraded us in the eyes of the universe. The regent sought, in the haunts of debauchery, a man whose very name pollutes the mind and sullies the imagination; he made him a pontiff; what do I say? he had the audacity to place him in the seat of the virtuous Fenelon. The nation was bound captive to the triumphal car of a band of prostitutes; and the whole regency
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was one perpetual celebration of the rites of obscenity. It was under the regent and the following reigns that the court conceived and executed the horrible idea of starving the people, by a public monopoly of corn; and what is still more incredible, all this was endured by the French nation.

Under the regent and his successors was seen the domination of the vilest passions. Wickedness and immorality spread from the centre of the empire to its most distant extremities; the contamination of libertinism infected the public manners; and the dissoluteness of the court pervaded the whole of the community. The most shameless licentiousness, the most Asiatic luxury extended itself from the bishops and rich beneficiaries to the mass of the clergy; and the altar was polluted by corruption and obscenity. The nobility imitated the government; they lost the dignified character of their ancestors, and gave themselves up to adulation, intrigue, and intemperance.

The regent wished to avoid the disgrace of an open bankruptcy; but Law sharing in the public intoxication, created an excess of paper-money,

money, and was carried away, in spite of all his efforts, by the force of a machine, whose motion had been occasionally accelerated.

Corruption and a frivolous luxury still continued to increase under the reign of Louis XV. This monarch was at first a votary of pleasure and of idleness; he became at last a votary of intemperance. The females of his court appointed and cashiered generals and ministers, and the state was a prey to their rapacity. The Chancellor Maupeou carried his meanness so far as to ally his family to a prostitute, who did not receive the caresses of the monarch until after she had satiated the desires of the public. The Duke de Choiseul had gained an ascendancy over the King, and even over Madame de Pompadour; Madame Dubarri and Monsieur d'Aiguillon leagued together against him. The Duke de Choiseul was an unprincipled minister, but he had, in a great degree, the talents of a statesman; he was a courtier, but he nevertheless possessed a certain elevation of mind. He was driven from the ministry. The government arrived at the lowest point of degeneracy, as the kingdom did of debasement. The Abbé Terray, not being able to raise a sufficient supply of money,

money, took it by force in the king's name; it is well known into what a degree of odium he fell on account of his exactions. France was at that time a prey to several different aristocracies, or rather tyrannies; that of the ministry and their subalterns, that of the clergy, that of the nobility, and that of the law; which latter, as all corporate aristocracies are, was the most grievous of all. The parliaments only busied themselves with the means of augmenting their prerogatives, and of feeding their pecuniary interests at the expence of the people. The result of this conduct was to precipitate their destruction; they had abandoned the people, and the people in turn abandoned them.

The nation, wearied out by so many tyrants, and so many abuses, by such insults and such calamities, shocked too by the ostentatious luxury and insolence of those who seemed to turn their sufferings into mockery, began to rouse itself from its long and profound lethargy. Louis XV. carried to his tomb the most deserved ignominy. It will not here be uncondusive to the instruction of nations to examine into that goodness of disposition so much vaunted, as a counterpoise to his vices. It is not a matter of indifference to inform mankind, that

this monarch, for whom France had gone to an extravagance, an enthusiasm of affection, loaded that country with a most enormous debt, gave it up to the plunder of the most abandoned ministers, and of the courtiers, male and female; and that he reduced the French name to the lowest state of degradation. We were so thoroughly debased as to render thanks to Louis XV. for not being so atrociously wicked as Tiberius, nor so great a monster as Nero. Perhaps the people only owed it to their extreme patience, and to the fear of the rapacious but timid ministers, that they did not behold scenes as sanguinary as those which other tyrants have exhibited. The soul of Louis XV. belonged to vice; and, in a despot, vice is nearly allied to ferocity.

As the ministerial despotism ruled more completely in this reign than in any other, we may here observe, that this is the most dreadful of all despotisms, because a minister can do evil with more impunity than a king. What has hitherto been the utmost risk that a minister ever incurred? His place. The history of administrations, if we except those of Amboise, Suger, Sully, and Turgot, presents only an odious combination of violence, robbery, and intrigue. It was by
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the ministers that those proscriptions, and that number of *lettres de cachet*, of which we shall hereafter have occasion to speak, were lavished; it was by them that the *red book*, of which we shall also detail some particulars, was filled; lastly, it is by them that those torrents of gold are in all countries dissipated, which result only from as many torrents of tears and of blood.

And if from ministers we ascend to kings, what a sad and shocking idea shall we have of the manner in which nations have been governed! We behold a long train of indolent monarchs who, for two hundred years, slept upon the throne: we see an Isabella of Bavaria an unnatural mother; a Louis XI. a parricide; a Mary de Medicis the assassin of her husband; a Louis XIII. avenging his father by parricide; a Charles IX. directing, with his own hand, the cannon against his people. What would be my task, were I to unfold the secret picture of their private lives, and disclose their wickedness without a veil! France has, like Rome, been tossed from the hands of a Tiberius to those of a Caligula, from a Claudius to a Nero, or, if you please, from a Louis XI. to a Charles IX. The
madness

madness of their conduct has, in all cases, equalled its extravagance; the usurpations and rapine of the subalterns has, in all cases, been screened by the usurpation and rapine of the despot. The weak have been continually oppressed by the strong. In all countries, both under the republican and monarchical forms of government, the sweat of the people has been drained, as the bloody sweat of the negroes is, at this moment, drained by certain governments. The governors have almost always regarded the people as sheep, valuable only for their fleeces or their carcases; and despots have treated men like the deer in their parks, whom they permit to live only that they may afford them the pleasure of a second chase. Hence that profound and just observation of Lucan, *humanum paucis vivit genus*, the human race lives but for the advantage of a few men. The history of the fifty-seven ages which have preceded us, has established this mournful truth; and the pages of that history are marked in bloody characters, with the avowed attacks of the governors upon the governed. Observe in badly organized republics, the proscriptions of their Decemvirs, their Mariuses, and their Syllas; consider attentively the convulsions which have taken place in all democracies; compare and judge! You will undoubtedly decide, that

the happiness of the people can only be secured by the morality of their governors, even in the least imperfect constitutions. You will conclude also, that the safety and tranquillity of nations are exposed to far the least hazard in those governments where the law forces men to be just, and where the balance and division of powers gives little scope to the efforts of faction and ambition.

BOOK V.

View of the Government during the Reign of Louis XVI.—The different Administrations of Maurepas, Vergennes, Turgot, Necker, and Calonne.—Those of Messrs. de Brienne and Lamoignon.—Convocation of the Notables.—Exile of the Parliament.—Royal Sitting or Plenary Court.—Massacres in the Streets of Mêlée and Saint Dominique, and in the Place Dauphine.—Dismission and Recall of Mons. Necker.—Convocation of the States General.—Finally the Situation of the Government, and Character of the Nation at that Period.

AFTER the death of Louis XV. the weight of the crown descended on the head of a king, who, with little personal abilities and few advantages

from education, took the reins of government. He had had a near insight into the vices of Louis the Fifteenth's reign; the glaring corruption struck him, and seems to have excited his disgust. He at first called around him those men who were pointed out as the most honest and skilful, with the exception, however, of the Count de Maurepas, a courtier no less inclined to corrupt than partaking of corruption. This man became the intimate counsellor, and even tutor of the young king: and he recalled the parliaments which Maupeou had abolished. Louis XV. had, it is said, recommended to him this choice. The foreign affairs were entrusted to Vergennes, against whom the commercial treaty with England will ever be matter of reproach. The Count de Mury, more fitted to discharge the duties of a capuchin than of a minister, had the war department; and Sartines that of the marine, to which he was an absolute stranger. The finances were at first entrusted to Monsieur de Clugni, a man of very limited views of administration: he was succeeded by Monsieur Turgot, well known on account of his pure, vigorous, and successful administration in the superintendence of the Limousin; he displayed extensive views and great abilities. These qualities exposed him to persecution. His severe and æco-

nomical probity accelerated his fall. M. Necker, previously known as a banker, was named director-general of the finances. Announcing a new system, and affecting a degree of Stoicism, he had many enthusiastic admirers, and many frantic calumniators: he deserved neither the one nor the other. Inflated with pride and vanity, obstinate in the support of his opinions, he was far from possessing a genius adapted to his situation; but he possessed the confidence of the public, and it is even allowed that he was not without probity. He employed the ruinous expedient of loans, he subjected every thing to the capitalists, and, in short, acted rather as a banker than as a man placed at the head of the finances of a great empire. He was never able to present, even to the constituent assembly, any of those vast conceptions, those renovating plans which circumstances seemed to demand. His greatest eulogium is that he dismissed the attendants of a corrupted court. In this he acted like Turgot; and it is generally acknowledged, that the retreat of both these ministers was owing to the influence, and to the rapacious cupidity of the queen and the Count d'Artois.

Monseigneur Joli de Fleuri succeeded Monsieur Necker: he augmented all the imposts without distinction,

distinction, at the rate of ten sous per livre on the value of the original imposition, and retired from office with a pension, and with contempt. M. d'Ormesson, a young man of acknowledged probity and candour, was also obliged to lay down, in his turn, a burden unequal to his strength. He was succeeded by Calonne, who, though branded with the public distrust, was sure of pleasing the court by his audacity and profusion. The Notables stated the amount of the *deficit* at one hundred and forty millions of livres; and it was M. Calonne who, in three years and four months, formed this deficit, if the account stated by Necker be exact; and it must be owned that all the presumptions are in his favour. The memorial published by M. Calonne, and dispersed with profusion, is far from proving the contrary.

The facility of raising loans was owing to the confidence generally placed in Necker, who at least was strong in the possession of public opinion. The want of abilities discernible in his immediate successors, and the unprincipled dissipation of Calonne, necessarily produced a contrary effect. This latter minister was therefore reduced to the necessity of convoking the *Notables*, on whom he thought he could impose by his audacity,

city, and, without doubt, also by the influence of corruption. He soon learnt, however, that the electricity of sentiment operates powerfully upon all assemblies of men; that the members of the provinces had not yet lost all their energy; that philosophy, and the encouraging example of the American revolution, inspired them with new ideas and new claims; finally, that the territorial impost which he proposed, and the odium of which he wished to cast upon the Notables, excited against him the rich, and particularly the parliaments. He wished to retreat, but it was too late, and he fell beneath the attacks of the two privileged orders.

De Brienne, Archbishop of Thoulouse, Calonne's inferior in talents, but his equal in iniquity, proposed to the parliament the same taxes, viz. a stamp duty and a territorial impost. The parliaments took advantage of the unpopularity of the latter to cause the rejection of both. Hence arose those combats between the parliaments and the court, that train of orders and refusals, of injunctions, remonstrances, and decrees, which terminated in the banishment of the parliament of Paris to Troyes. The parliaments, reduced to the necessity of declaring the truth, as the only means of freeing themselves from their embarrassments, now, for the first time, avowed that

that they had not the right of imposing taxes, and demanded the convocation of the States General. This demand disconcerted the ministry; and it was so warmly supported by the public, and repeated with so much boldness, that the king found himself obliged to consent. The parliaments thought that they should maintain the same influence over these states as they had over the states of 1614. Their intention was ultimately to cast upon the people the imposts with which they were menaced. And have we, in fact, ever beheld the parliaments oppose the rapacity and corruption of ministers? Have they restrained the shameless increase of taxes? Have they not openly abused their authority by pursuing, or, at least, permitting the most infamous traffic of the most sacred of earthly things, justice and the laws? Did they not oppose the establishment of the provincial assemblies? The people preserved a respect, founded on habit, for these venerable idols, these ancient corporations; but that respect ceased, and the iniquity of the parliaments appeared without disguise, when, after declaring, previous to their banishment, that they were incompetent to the registering of imposts, they had the absurdity and the meanness to purchase their

return by registering a continuation of the *Vingtièmes*. *

The ministry thought this a favourable opportunity to establish a *Plenary Court*, specious in its appearance, but which would enable them to effect their purposes without the interference of the parliaments or the States General. It was to be composed of princes and peers, marshals of France, and a few magistrates of parliament, that is to say, of men devoted entirely to the court. The king held a royal sitting at the parliament, M. d'Eprémefnil electrified every bosom with the fire of his eloquence, and animated every mind against the court. The palace was invested with troops. Brienne and Lamignon were publicly insulted. Monsieur d'Agoult, a second Buffi le Clerc, entered insolently into the court of peers, and demanded his victims. *We are all Goëslard and d'Eprémefnil*, answered the magistrates. Every Frenchman was on that day a d'Eprémefnil, for they did not then know that he was only an enemy of the minister, and not a friend of the nation. The satellites of tyranny led away the two magistrates in their robes, who gave themselves up to

* A tax of one-twentieth part of all kinds of produce.

them

them to prevent the pollution of that sanctuary which they had orders to profane. The Duke of Orleans had been previously banished.

A few days after this sitting appeared the famous edicts of the 8th of May 1788. At another time the establishment of the grand bailiwicks fixed by these edicts, would have been received with pleasure; but the hatred and distrust excited by the Plenary Court had now attached the nation to the cause of the parliaments: the courageous resistance of the people of Rennes, the vigorous publications of the intermediate commission of the states of Brittany, and the firm, prudent, and truly patriotic conduct of the states of Dauphiné, triumphed over the royal power, and at once overturned the Plenary Court, its imprudent authors Lamoignon and Brienne, and the grand bailiwicks, which they had also created. The parliaments were reinstated in their functions.

The frequent exhibition of beds of justice, the subversion of the parliaments, their exile, the imprisonment of several of their members, the sudden arrest of twelve gentlemen of Brittany, and their confinement in the Bastille, and, finally, the establishment of a Plenary Court, together

together with the employment of the armed force against the magistracy, all these acts of violence and despotism had excited in Paris, and still more in the provinces, universal discontent, the presage of a general insurrection. At Grenoble a violent commotion was on the point of breaking out; and the citizens had already taken up arms.

France had now been for five months deprived of her tribunals and her magistrates. The semblance of public force still restrained the people, particularly at Paris; but the despotism of the minister in whose department the direction of that city was, joined to the violence of the *commandant* of police, burst the last bond of licentiousness, by turning a day of patriotic rejoicing into a day of carnage and of mourning. The young men of Paris had asked permission of the lieutenant de police to give a public proof of their joy at the dismissal of M. de Brienne, the prime minister. They assembled in the square called *Place Dauphine*, carrying about an effigy representing the discarded minister, which they afterwards committed to the flames. The next day they wished to have repeated this ceremony; but the Chevalier Dubois, *commandant* of police, determined to oppose

pose it. He imagined that twenty horsemen, supported by about fifty musqueteers, would be able to disperse more than twenty thousand persons. He ordered them to charge upon the people, and to attack every one they should meet. Several persons were wounded; and some lost their lives. The people rallied, disarmed and stripped the soldiers, burned their regimentals, and dismissed them with sentiments of commiseration very honourable to themselves, but which, it must be owned, the soldiers little deserved. This example proved that the people are not ferocious, unless when they are headed by ferocious leaders, to whose voice, however, they are unfortunately but too ready at all times to listen.

It was thought possible to repair the first crime by a second of a still blacker dye. This undisciplined and incensed multitude having pursued their way to the *Place de Grève*, a large body of troops which were posted there, under cover of the shades of night, poured upon them redoubled volleys of musquetry, and left a great number dead upon the spot.

The retreat of M. de Lamoignon caused a renewal of the same scenes, and a repetition of the

the same crimes. No satellite as yet disturbed the public joy ; but some villains, hired for the purpose, mingled with the crowd, and excited them to vengeance. M. de Brienne, brother of the ex-minister, and minister of war himself, arrived from Versailles at the very moment when these wretches were attacking his house with the intent of setting fire to it. The only way to have prevented the effusion of blood, and to have put a stop to this confusion, would have been to intimidate the multitude, by drawing out a large armed force : but it was esteemed a shorter method to massacre them without pity. Two bodies of soldiery entered at once at the different extremities of the street of *Saint Dominique*, and made a horrible butchery. The same carnage took place, and in the same manner, in the street of *Mêlée*, where the Chevalier Dubois lived. He was summoned to appear before the parliament, but the major of the guard appeared in his name and presented a superior order, which exculpated him. It is thus that the lives of the citizens are sported with in an arbitrary government. The parliament, by a decree, commanded a process to be instituted against the authors of these massacres ; but pretended motives of prudence, which never can excuse the weakness of the magistrates, prevented

vented any further steps from being taken in the business. Thus did a senseless government accustom the people to supply the defect of the laws by avenging blood with blood. The *French guards* reflecting on the cruel orders which they had received, and indignant at finding themselves employed as mere executioners, felt that their oath bound them to defend, and not to oppress, their country. Thus did despotism annihilate its greatest resource by its abuse. It sifted, winnowed, pressed out, and devoured its subjects, and thus it was finally devoured itself.

France was now in an universal ferment. Completely enslaved until this period, it at length began to shake off its chains. It arose from its lethargy, and at once perceived the whole extent of its evils, and the whole extent of its powers. This twofold information produced the most astonishing revolution that has taken place in the world. The following part of this work will decide whether it should be also accounted the most fortunate.

The depredations committed in the finances are scarcely to be paralleled in history. The court of Louis XIV. and even that of the regent, and of Louis XV., were parsimonious when

when compared with that of Louis XVI. Every wish was now turned towards two objects which were regarded as the guardian planets of France, the States General, and M. Necker. He was supposed to be the only man who could disperse the clouds of the administration, reanimate public confidence, and support the state in this critical moment. The national voice is raised on all sides in a decisive tone : it calls the people to liberty. M. Necker is recalled. The parliaments, which at times enjoyed but little popularity, but which were regarded as a temporary barrier against the enterprizes of the government, were restored to their functions. Above all, the convocation of the States General was promised ; and this event was preceded by a crowd of writings and pamphlets which disclosed the secret of monarchy, and taught the people their rights. Several celebrated writers had long ago torn away the veil which had been thrown before the eyes of nations, and the reader will see, in the following Book, that before the time of M. Necker France had already the sentiments of freedom. The government, no less ignorant than prodigal, did not even suspect this important truth. M. de Vergennes, who had only the narrow views of a creature of the desk, did not foresee the effect which the American revolution would produce when

when he advised Louis XVI. to forward it with his utmost exertions.

BOOK VI.

Influence of Writers upon the National Mind,—Appointment of the assembling of the States for the Month of January 1789.—Second Meeting of the Notables.—Remonstrances and Efforts of the Parliaments, the Clergy, and the Nobility, in favour of adopting the Forms of 1614.—M. Necker causes a Representation to be granted to the Tiers Etat equal to that of both the other Orders.—Admirable Conduct of the Province of Dauphiné.—Mirabeau elected a Deputy by the Tiers Etat.—Troubles in Brittany.—Tumult at the Champ de Montmorin.—Impolitic Proceedings of the Parliaments.—Horrible Expression of M. de Brienne.

WE have seen that the long continuance of the monarchy presented only an afflicting detail of the miseries of the people, of the gradual extension of despotism, and of the prodigality of the government. The kingdom changed its tyrants, but the administration changed neither its principles nor its

its forms. Short gleams of success, and long trains of disasters, extravagant projects, or wise plans abandoned with the wildest fickleness, form the sad compendium of our history. Two centuries of grandeur closed the eyes of Frenchmen to the wounds of their country; and the commencement of the reign of Louis XVI. seemed to present a hope that, as France had already passed from a mixed to a feudal government, and from that to an absolute monarchy, it might now pass from an absolute monarchy to one truly popular and paternal: but the weakness of the monarch himself, the fatal ascendancy of the queen, of the Count d'Artois, and of Madame Polastron de Polignac, who had all the ambition of Madame d'Ancre, the rapacity of a crowd of courtiers, the ignorance and immorality of an administration omnipotent in evil, and incapable of good, the innumerable obstacles which well-informed and virtuous officers experienced, all together plunged the kingdom into the convulsions of despair and indignation. A feeble king is perhaps the worst of kings, and a prodigal government becomes barbarous by its very want of power. Louis XVI. brought to our recollection Claudius, and the queen seemed to represent Messalina. Fortunately the minds of men were not degraded, as in the
time

time of Claudius, and philosophy had long prepared this age for the reception of liberty. If the nation seemed till now destitute of any fixed character, it was because the principles of the government changed with every minister. The influence of writers alone preserved the sacred fire of liberty. Men of vigorous and transcendent genius cultivated the seeds of energy in the public mind, and disseminated those principles which only awaited a proper opportunity to receive their application and to develop their power. In spite of the general and deep-rooted corruption, the hatred of despotism existed in all our hearts as it did in all our writings.

In the last century, the sage Locke published his *Treatise on Civil Government*; Bodin had long before written his book, intitled, *The Republic*; the immortal Montesquieu, about the middle of this century, produced his famous work on *The Spirit of Laws*; and the errors which escaped this great man were too trifling to weaken the great truths which this work, in so brilliant a style, delivered. Who before him took so close a view of the social system? Who, even after him, has viewed from such an elevation so vast a field? He was the first whose analysis discovered the secret spring, and all the hidden movements of the political

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litical machine, the eternal relations and re- actions of men and things, of manners and education, of climate and government. To the inventions of genius he added the embellishment of talents; he rendered science sovereign; he did more, he rendered it popular and almost universal. Equal to him, or even more interesting, was Voltaire, that indefatigable writer, who, for sixty years together, combated every prejudice civil and religious, sometimes with the shaft of ridicule, sometimes with the sword of reason and knowledge, but always with the charm of eloquence and the magic of poetic colouring. His prose was greedily devoured, and the verses of his *Mahomet*, his *Brutus*, and his *Death of Cesar*, were in every mouth. Raynal in his *Commerce of the Europeans in the Indies*, Boulanger in his *Oriental Despotism*, and Helvetius in his work on *The Mind*, illustrated all the great questions relative to the happiness and liberty of mankind; but it was J. J. Rousseau who contributed the most to overthrow the antique Colossus of despotism; he even predicted that revolution which he has so much influenced. "We advance," says he, in his *Emilius*, "towards a state of crisis, "an age of Revolutions." He declaimed against the existing abuses and prejudices with the most glowing oratory; and in his *Social Contract*, he
philoso-

philosophically developed and established the constitutional principles of government. An unjustifiable use has been made of this book, and of the maxims which it contains; they have been applied to the support of democracy, although Rousseau positively says, "that a pure democracy is only fit for Gods." He was, therefore, far from establishing it in the constitution which he was requested to draw up for Poland. If Montesquieu and Rousseau asserted the rights of the human race, the austere and profound Mably asserted those of the French nation. His works were in the hands of all thinking persons, and he is one of those whose writings have been most consulted in forming the code of our new institutions. Add to these works, the excellent production of M. de Lolme, the *Inquiries relative to the United States of America*, by a Citizen of Virginia, and the *Defence of the American Constitution*, by John Adams.

Philosophy had made still greater advances, and already had Messrs. Turgot, Condorcet, and some other philosophers, written on the future perfectibility of mankind, not only in a moral but even in a physical point of view. Such was the disposition of the general mind when the government announced the speedy convocation of the States General. Then appeared crowds of

bold manly compositions: despotism in vain wished to stop this torrent of knowledge: books appeared as if from under ground. The generality of them had a popular cast, which brought them to the level of common minds. The government was obliged to allow every thing to be written, and every thing to be spoken.

Every one agreed as to the necessity of assembling the States General; but the people, and the nation at large, (which we are far from confounding with the people,) desired that they should not be vain and illusory like those of the preceding centuries. The parliaments, which to free themselves from embarrassment, and perhaps to gain popularity, had been the first to demand their convocation, already repented of it, and being unable to retard it, obstinately contended for their conformity to the forms of 1614, as the most favorable to their own views; they decreed that the States General could not be assembled on any other grounds. This proceeding evinced their ignorance of the times in which they lived. And, in consequence, their ridiculous pretension to regulate the national assembly entirely deprived them of the public confidence.

The nobility, the superior clergy, and the whole court, already declared their design of tyrannising
over

over the states. Thus to the vast mass of combustible materials ready to consume every thing, was added a diversity of opinions, a struggle of opposite interests and rival passions, which plainly foreboded the explosions which were about to take place.

M. Necker thought that it did not belong to the king's council, amidst so many opposite claims, to decide all the various questions relative to the formation of an assembly no less majestic than important. He again convoked the Notables to consult them: from their previous firmness he inferred their future impartiality; he was ignorant that the great energies of the soul belong but to certain periods, and that they cannot be twice exerted. The Notables of 1789 were physically the same as those of 1787, but they were morally different. This fault in the political calculations of M. Necker, was at first productive of much mischief; but had it not been for this, we should not have had all the good which has since arisen; we should have had only a half-liberty, and half-liberty is as impossible as half-justice or half-truth. It may indeed be said, with reason, that we should not have seen crimes, blood, and all sorts of calamities poured out in torrents against us under the reign of Robespierre. It is thus that evil is always asso-

ciated with good, and that mankind can never enjoy unmixed happiness.

The States General met with a further delay, and time was given to men to catch the electricity of sentiment, to feel their souls exalted and their passions inflamed. The privileged orders showed all their fury at this second assemblage of the Notables; and they formed such cabals, that it was with difficulty Necker could obtain for the people an equality of representation, and could establish population as the basis of deputation, so that the representation of the Tiers-Etat should be equal to that of the two other orders united, that they should vote individually, and that the subsidies should be proportionally divided amongst all the citizens without distinction of rank. These bases had been already established by the Notables convoked during the ministry of M. de Calonne, and adopted by all the provincial administrations created by that assembly. It was on these grounds also that the province of *Dauphiné* drew up, for its particular states, a plan of organization applicable to the whole kingdom, a plan which was judged worthy to serve as a model for all the other provinces, and as an elementary regulation for the national assemblies. Thus did Dauphiné excite the admiration and rivalry of all France.

Whilst

Whilst the court and the parliaments were busy in attempting to establish an aristocratic basis, Mably published his *Observations on the History of France*, a work which may be regarded as a detail of the national rights, in opposition to the royal despotism. Cerutti defended the interests of the people with a glowing style and a brilliant eloquence. M. Mounier unfolded the ancient archives of the States General; and M. d'Entraignes boldly declaimed against the destructive evils of an hereditary nobility, and painted the just but disgusting picture of the corrupted soul of Louis XI.

It is here to be observed that M. Necker, whether through prudence or through weakness, acted well in not deciding the question of deliberating individually or by the orders; the opposition between the orders would otherwise have taken place before the meeting of the States General, and perhaps the meeting itself would have been prevented. By referring that question to the States General themselves, when the two parties would be fairly opposed to each other, he really gave the victory to the strongest; and thus it proved in the event.

The people loaded M. Necker with benedictions, and the privileged orders vowed an irre-

concilable hatred against him. The province of Dauphiné inscribed on their registers the report of M. Necker, which induced the King's council to grant the Tiers-Etat, a representation equal in number to that of both the other orders. The southern provinces on their part remonstrated against the oppressive system of their ancient government. The possessors of signorial fiefs contended in Provence against the three orders who united in demanding this just and wise representation, announced and promised to France. These signorial lords violated a fundamental law of the assemblage of the States, by presenting themselves in a body to an assembly at which they ought only to have assisted by deputies. They had in their favour the parliament and the Archbishop of Aix, and against them justice and Mirabeau: they could not but be conquered; but it was a great point gained to the aristocracy to have sown dissension among the good citizens.

On the other hand, the aristocracy had great reason to lament their having so far mistaken the character of Mirabeau, as to give the Tiers-Etat the advantage of deputing to the national assembly a member, who joined to the energies of mind the powers of oratory and action,
equally

equally skilled in the developement of intrigue, and in the discussion of all matters which were submitted to the deliberation of the assembly; in short, one of those prodigies of genius, whose appearance, like that of a new planet, gives a new movement to the whole system, and seems intended to change the surface of the globe and the fate of the universe. Every page of the revolution is marked with the name of Mirabeau; but this is not the place to delineate or to decide on his political character; we have now to pursue the first steps of his career. He first excited in Provence that enthusiasm which he afterwards communicated to the whole kingdom. At Aix the young men of the city assigned him an honorary guard; and he became the idol and even the judge of his fellow-citizens. He thus expressed himself at the assembly of the States of Provence; “Ye Commons, listen to one
“ who cherishes your applause in his heart
“ without being seduced by it! Man is only
“ strong in union: he is only happy in peace.
“ Be firm, but not stubborn; bold, but not tumultuous; free, but not undisciplined; animated, but not enthusiastic. Regard none but
“ objects of importance, and in their pursuit be
“ inflexible; but disdain the contentions of self-
“ love,

“ love, and put not an individual in the balance
“ againſt your country.”

He took, before the whole nation, that engagement which ſhould have been the ſtandard of his political conduct; but to which we ſhall ſee that he was far from being faithful. “ As
“ for me,” ſaid he, “ who in my public career
“ have feared nothing but error; who, firm in
“ my conſcience, and armed with my principles, would brave the oppoſition of the uni-
“ verſe; whether my labours and my voice be
“ deſtined to ſupport your cauſe in the national
“ aſſembly, or whether my wiſhes alone attend
“ you thither, the vain clamours, the injurious
“ outcries, the furious menaces, in a word, all
“ the convulſions of expiring prejudice, ſhall
“ weigh with me as nothing. What! ſhall
“ I at this day hesitate in the career of
“ civiſm? I, who was the firſt Frenchman that
“ openly profeſſed his opinions on national af-
“ fairs, and that at a time when circumſtances
“ were far leſs urgent, and when the taſk was
“ far more hazardous? No! violence ſhall
“ never ſhake my firmneſs. *I have been, I am,*
“ *I will to my grave continue the man of public*
“ *liberty, the man of the conſtitution.* Woe to
8 “ the

the privileged orders, if this is in fact to be the man of the people! for privileges will pass away; but the people is eternal."

The contention which broke out between the Tiers-Etat and the two other orders in most of the assemblies of bailiwicks, to choose electors and nominate deputies to the States General, confirmed the observation, that the political schism was determined, and that a great struggle was beginning between the public interest and the partisans of privilege. At the first view it seemed that as the King had convoked the States General, and granted to the Tiers-Etat a representation equal to that of both the clergy and nobility; and as those orders seemed inclined even to renounce their pecuniary privileges, there remained no difficulty to overcome. But this observation was by no means founded in a knowledge of human nature; in fact, nothing was done, or even begun, which could at all conduce to the establishment of mutual harmony and co-operation. M. Necker had left the most important objects undecided: the letters of convocation had not even fixed the mode of election for the different orders; it was, indeed, said, that each order should elect

elect a certain number of deputies; but it was left to their free choice to deviate from the general rule by making their elections together, and by a union of the orders. This latter form in some bailiwicks was preferred. Had that been made an invariable rule, which was only granted as a permission, it would probably have produced very great advantages: the Tiers-Etat participating in the election of deputies with the clergy and nobility, several violent aristocrats would not have succeeded, and several furious democrats would not have been named. It is true, however, that the general character of the deliberations of the national assembly, where the most violent men had generally the greatest influence over the three orders united, may cause a doubt as to the good effect of the communion of these three orders. An individual, who had at first a show of moderation, was often urged to extremes by policy or enthusiasm. It is also true that we cannot judge of an electoral assembly by any analogy to the impulses which direct its movements, and which are frequently foreign to those of the constituent body. Nevertheless it is beyond dispute that M. Necker committed a great fault by this proceeding. A minister may not always be able to warrant the success of a good plan, but he is blameable

blameable if he does not try all methods to insure its success; and an election thus settled might have prevented many troubles; or at least the minister would have freed himself from reproach.

We have beheld with admiration the conduct of Dauphiné: this province, together with Brittany and Bearne, had formed a sacred conspiracy against the despotism of the court. Attempts were made to divide them, by saying that the kingdom was threatened with a free constitution, which, it was said, was an attack on the rights of the nobility and clergy, and on the ancient forms of the provincial states. The priests and nobles of Bearne suffered themselves to be seduced, or rather conceived an obstinate attachment to their privileges. They wrote to the states of Dauphiné to exhort them to form an union. This letter afforded them an opportunity of giving new proofs of their enlightened and generous patriotism: they answered that their first title was that of Frenchmen and citizens, that the prerogatives of orders and of provinces were no otherwise valuable in their eyes than as barriers against despotism; but that the sacrifice of privileges was the first which ought to be made to public liberty.

The

The divisions nevertheless continued in Brittany ; they re-animated the hopes of the aristocrats. The Bretons, those ancient friends of liberty, were united together against the court ; but they were very much divided amongst themselves with regard to the rights and separate claims of the three orders. In their assemblies, the Tiers-Etat were not represented ; for they could not regard as representatives the municipal officers nominated and chosen by the King. The clergy of the second order, whom the insolence of the first order had denominated the *inferior clergy*, were excluded from the states. The decisions were made by orders ; but unanimity being requisite only in matters of taxation, two orders, in all other affairs, dictated the law. The intermediate commissions, to which the details of administration were entrusted, were composed of an equal number of citizens of each order, and their decisions were only made by a plurality of voices ; but as the representatives of the Tiers-Etat were in general burgessees, they only endeavoured to deliver the inhabitants of towns from the weight of impositions, which consequently fell almost entirely upon the inhabitants of the country.

All the municipalities of Brittany assembled, in order to take advantage of the grand impulse
given

given by Dauphiné, and sent a numerous deputation to the King, to carry to the foot of the throne their remonstrances on the vicious organization of their states. This example was followed by a prodigious number of towns and provinces. The Breton nobility thought that they beheld in such a movement an unanimous project of insurrection against themselves on the part of the people. They moreover viewed with a religious veneration the constitution of Brittany; and this veneration was augmented by perceiving how greatly their privileges were favoured by such a constitution. Whilst the public mind was thus unfortunately agitated, the states were convened at Rennes on the 29th of December 1788. The fermentation of the two parties was extreme. The Tiers-Etat resolved to take no part in the deliberations, and to oppose to them a passive resistance. The parliament, composed almost entirely of nobles, blew up the flame of dissension, instead of endeavouring to extinguish it. They summoned the syndics of the corporations to a personal appearance; and this order, which it was not judged fit to obey, increased the general animosity. The absurd conduct, perhaps premeditated, of some furious partizans of privilege, occasioned a train of pernicious consequences. A mob
assembled

assembled in the *Champ de Montmorin*. The nobility and clergy were besieged in their hall of assembly ; and some preceding scenes of bloodshed caused a just apprehension of still greater evils. The president commanded or advised the states to separate. They felt the necessity of obeying him, and an apparent calm succeeded, which but ill concealed the enmity that actuated every bosom.

The parliament of Rennes was, without doubt, the first cause of the troubles of Brittany. That of Dauphiné twice endeavoured to recede, but was restrained by the menaces of the people. The parliament of Besançon did not succeed any better in its hostile intentions toward the Tiers-Etat : and it was the same with the parliaments of Rouen and Paris. The nobility of Franche-Compté were also obliged to yield ; at length Dauphiné herself, that nurse of French liberty, had to struggle against the pride of birth. The two higher orders added to the degradation of a cause, fundamentally unjust, by the forms, that is to say, the low artifices which they used for its support. The court secretly encouraged these dissensions, of which, perhaps, M. Necker alone was ignorant. The subsequent conduct of the court strengthens this presumption ;

sumption ; and, indeed, we have a right to impute to it the whole of the evil, since the course of events has so clearly evinced its hostile intentions. It is well known, that in the administration of M. de Breteuil, some person having observed to that minister the terrible consequences that were to be apprehended from a civil war, he had the audacious coolness to reply, "*We have calculated upon that.*" What an expression ! What a court ! What a minister !

Cabal and intrigue set all their springs in motion during the elections ; but though the choice of the electors was frequently erroneous, it was, in many instances, admirable ; and the national assembly, as we shall presently observe, presented a grand display of talents to the nation. These primary and electoral assemblies put in motion six millions of men, prepared them by degrees for the tumultuous struggles of liberty, showed them more and more the necessity of gaining instruction, and of knowing men and things ; and finally became to the Tiers-Etat so many reservoirs of information and of energy. There remained, indeed, the rock of anarchy ; and the future part of this history will prove that this was a rock which we were not skilful enough to avoid. Yet amongst all these divisions it was consoling to observe, that the nation, nay the

human race, had attained a nobler elevation; and it was even then evident, that the almost inevitable scourge of anarchy would rather urge such a nation to embrace a government founded on wise and solid principles, than to throw itself again into the arms of despotism.

BOOK VII.

Tumult excited against M. Réveillon.—Motives and Pretexes of this Tumult.—Bloody Contest at the Fauxbourg St. Antoine.—Opening of the States General.—Their first Sitting.—Open Division of the three Orders.—Conferences on the Invitation of the King.—Plan of Accommodation proposed by him.—Manner in which it was received by each Order.—Invitation of the Commons to the two other Orders to unite.—Laudable Conduct of three Clergymen.—The Commons constitute themselves a National Assembly.—Oath of the Tennis Court.—Agitation at Paris and Versailles.—M. Necker called for by the People.—His Appearance appeases them.—Schemes against Public Liberty.—Reflections on the Court and the Nobility, on the Instructions and limited Powers of the Deputies.

WHILST the minds of men were divided by the most important interests, and occupied by the most important

important questions which can be offered to investigation, the court, and the higher part of the aristocracy foresaw that the storm would burst on themselves. They accumulated fault upon fault. Instead of yielding prudently to the storm, and thus avoiding a part of its force, they did every thing in their power to render the consequences more disastrous, and to irritate still more the public mind. They had recourse to one of those methods, but too familiar to corrupt and evil-minded governments; and resolved, for the second time since the commencement of the revolution, to oppose public opinion with the force of the bayonet. It was determined to collect together in Paris a sufficient number of troops to intimidate that great city. A pretence was necessary for such a proceeding; and the following was adopted. The immense multitude of workmen and labourers who inhabit the *Fauxbourg* of Saint Antoine and that of Saint Marceau, was to be incited to outrage; and these people were chosen, because, by their necessary want of information, and by their ignorance of public affairs in general, but still more of the artifices of a court, they were easily open to delusion. All that was wanted for this purpose, was a man of respectability to serve as a victim, and a villain to undertake to calumniate him. The Abbé Roi

seized with avidity the opportunity of committing so useful a crime. This Abbé had been secretary to M. d'Artois, and he had contrived to obtain the patronage of M. de Charost, who gave him letters of recommendation to M. Reveillon, a respectable citizen of the *Fauxbourg* Saint Antoine, who had a paper manufactory there, in which he employed a great number of workmen, to whom he was a benefactor and a father. This merchant had lent a considerable sum of money to the Abbé Roi, who did not keep his promise of repayment. M. Reveillon wrote, in consequence, to M. Charost, begging that he would obtain him a reimbursement of the sums advanced to the persons whom he had patronized. M. de Charost sent his letter to Roi, who tore off the signature, and wrote over it an obligation for 6000 livres in favour of himself. The merchant, irritated at this proceeding, laid the whole affair before a court of justice: and it was at this moment that the Abbé Roi embraced the plan for his destruction. On a sudden a report is spread that M. Reveillon has reduced the pay of his workmen to fifteen sous per day, that he had been heard to say that the common bread was too good for them, and that he had been driven out of his district for his inhumanity. The officers
of

of the barriers had given notice that, within a few days, a vast number of suspicious persons had entered the city. No attention was paid to this information; nor was any attempt made to investigate the truth of those accusations against Reveillon, which it would have been so easy to ascertain. The inhabitants of both the Fauxbourgs, imposed on by the calumny, flocked together: and a crowd of strangers, whom nobody had ever seen before, and who were unknown even to the inspectors of the police, burnt an effigy which they called Reveillon, and condemned Reveillon himself to death on a pretended decree of the Tiers-Etat. M. Reveillon hastened to implore the assistance of the lieutenant de police; the patrole, both horse and foot, were otherwise employed, and he was referred to the commander of the French guards. After much useless trouble, he at last obtained sight of this officer, who promised him a strong force, but sent only a few soldiers, whilst a battalion of the French guards, then in Paris, might have prevented all the mischief; and they had frequently been employed on occasions of much less consequence. The rioters passed the night in drinking, and in preparing, by the ferocity of their orgies, for the crimes of the morrow; and all this while the guardians of the police were asleep! Money was scattered in

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profusion

profusion to gain new accomplices. They broke into Reveillon's house, from whence he had fortunately escaped with his wife, and there they plundered and destroyed every thing. Many of these wretches, who had forced their way into the cellars to gorge themselves with wine and spirits, met with a deserved death, by swallowing large draughts of nitrous acid and other preparations used in dying the paper. At length appeared a formidable detachment of the military. The mob converted into weapons every thing that fell in their way. The French and Swiss guards for a long while endured the attacks of this intoxicated and furious multitude; at length they received orders to defend themselves, or rather to slaughter the rioters. Their revenge was terrible: every person that appeared on the roofs was shot, and the people were pursued with the bayonet. Some more cavalry and infantry came up, and the cannon were pointed upon the Faubourg. The crowd was soon dispersed: many were left dead on the spot. The people is, in all cases, at once the instrument and the victim. Paris beheld with terror that vast armed force which so evidently menaced its liberty. The soldiers themselves detested the service which had been required of them; and thus did despotism, without suspecting it, concur in gaining over the armed force to the common cause of the citizens.

The

The day which had been fixed for the opening of the States General at length appeared. The 5th of May 1789 will be one of the most celebrated epochs in our annals. Every preparation was made to mark, in the strongest manner, the distinction of the orders ; so determined was the resolution of maintaining it. Besides the difference of dress, the impolicy of irritating the deputies of the commons was carried so far as to assign them a back-door connected with a corridor, where they were crowded together for several hours, whilst the king, the court, and the deputies of the two higher orders passed through the great door. It may be easily imagined how little such an absurdity was calculated to conciliate the general sentiments. The haughtiness expressed in these trifles seemed to indicate that, which would appear in matters of greater consequence.

After the long and tedious ceremony of calling over names, the deputies of the commons were introduced. The king and the keeper of the seals each made a speech according to form ; that of the director-general of the finances attracted the greatest attention, but afforded little satisfaction. He seemed to want system and genius ; and the friends of liberty were displeased

at his having said nothing of the constitution. It was not sufficiently considered that the States General would, perhaps, have been disgusted at his wishing to mark out the line of their conduct; and if the king's minister had mentioned the constitution he would, perhaps, have deprived himself of the further means of serving the public. Such, probably, were the motives which actuated M. Necker; but a bold and comprehensive genius would have disregarded such considerations: the enthusiasm which he might have excited would have supported him in his place, and the assembly would have yielded to the superiority of his project. M. Necker evinced on this occasion that he was not equal to the elevation of his place, nor of the existing circumstances. We shall presently see how unsatisfactory were the plans which he offered for renovating the finances of a great nation. In the latter case the assembly itself consulted him, and there was nothing to restrain his conceptions. But he was, in general, unable to calculate either the public energy, or the perversity of the parties hostile to the revolution.

On the very next day the contest of the two parties, so inveterately hostile to each other, began to be manifested. The deputies of the commons

commons repaired to the hall of the States General, which they considered, with reason, as the National Hall; and there awaited the arrival of the other two orders for the purpose of deliberating in common, whilst the latter assembled, each in a separate chamber, and began the verification of their powers. This was a declaration that they would not unite with the deputies of the Tiers-Etat. Thus the dispute, which was expected to turn on the question of voting *by orders*, or *individually*, began on the verification of the powers in common.

The deputies of the people said, that even though the orders should deliberate separately, which, however, they were far from thinking allowable, the powers ought nevertheless to be verified in common; and that as each order was to deliberate on general propositions, it was just that each should know whether the deputies of the others were legally appointed. The commons, left to themselves, had to oppose all the factions united, that of the clergy, the nobility, of the parliaments, and of the financiers who were supported by the court. The deputies of the Tiers-Etat, therefore, persuaded, that in so delicate a situation the only means of success was to remain in inaction, and to oppose a
passive

passive resistance, adhered faithfully to this plan of inactivity. They contented themselves with assuming a provisional organization ; at the same time carefully preserving the character of an assembly not finally constituted, and whose members had not yet verified their powers. They invited the clergy and the nobility to join them. The nobility positively refused, signifying to the commons that they considered themselves as legally constituted. The clergy, however, suspended the verification of their own powers, and seemed inclined to act a mediatorial part ; but the commons adhered steadily to their system of inaction. The king proposed several conferences to reconcile the different sentiments ; but these had not, nor indeed could possibly have, any success. The commons then sent a final deputation to the two orders, inviting them to unite in the National Hall, in order that all the powers might be verified in common, and informing them that they should, on that very day, proceed to call over the bailiwicks.

In the course of the latter conferences the minister had proposed, on the part of the king, a plan of reconciliation, or rather of accommodation, to the following effect : 1st, That the three orders, after having verified their powers separately,

separately, should mutually communicate them to each other. 2dly, That if any disputes should arise, commissioners chosen from the three orders should take cognizance of them, and make a report to the different chambers, each of which should decide on them separately. 3dly, That in case of a different decision on the same subject by the different orders, his majesty should take cognizance of it, and pronounce on it definitively.

It is easy to conceive that the two higher orders readily applauded this arrangement; but the commons felt it as an attack on the majesty of the nation, by rendering the king arbitrator of the differences and interests of the three orders.

The public began to grow impatient at these delays. Already had five weeks been wasted in fruitless discussions. During these dissensions numerous meetings of the citizens took place at the *Palais-Royal*, most of whom were men of information, and of leisure, young, impetuous, friends of the revolution, having every thing to hope and nothing to fear from a new order of things, indignant against despotism, and ardent lovers of liberty. The principal seat of these patriotic

patriotic associations was a house called the *Café de Foi*. Hither many of the deputies frequently came from Versailles to partake of the magnetism of public opinion. These assemblages and groups augmented daily; they had their orators and their secretaries; they made motions, passed resolutions, and drew up addresses. The history of the revolution will prove that, if these meetings have sometimes been dangerous to liberty, they have, in other instances, favoured its progress; and that they particularly operated with great efficacy to this end, in the early periods of the revolution. Hence we may conclude that, in the same degree in which the numerous meetings of this sort ought to be encouraged in the commencement of a revolution, they are to be looked upon as useless, or even hurtful, under a good and fixed constitution. It is true, that both at Rome and at Athens the citizens discussed the affairs of government in the public squares; and that Cato and the other senators did not disdain to be present on such occasions. It appears, nevertheless, to be the part of a well-established government to prefer the surest means of preserving public tranquillity, and to prohibit meetings which, when they have taken a degree of consistency, it is sometimes too late to dissolve.

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The deputies of the commons, strengthened by the concurring sentiments and power of a great nation, at length took the decisive resolution of verifying their powers by themselves, of declaring themselves representatives of the French people, and of constituting themselves a national assembly. The first exercise of their power was, after the suppression of the ancient imposts, the renovation of them by a new authority, pledging themselves and the national honour to the payment of the public debt; and finally declaring that they would devote themselves to the great work of the constitution and regeneration of the empire. We owe it to posterity to commemorate the names of three priests * of Poitou, who on the 12th of June, at the calling over of the bailiwicks, joined the commons; they were called *Leceve*, *Ballard*, and *Jallet*.

It was on the 17th of June that the *Tiers-Etat* constituted themselves a national assembly in presence of an immense concourse of spectators, who made the hall resound with acclamations of

* *Curés*, rectors, or parochial ministers. The similitude of their denomination to that of the lowest rank among our English clergy has given some colour to the palpable misrepresentation inferred in Mr. Burke's expression, "mere country curates," applied to this part of the French deputies.

Vive l'Assemblée Nationale! Vive le Roi! Every one felt that the nation had risen to her just elevation. The court and the privileged orders trembled at the firmness of conduct, the dignity and resolution displayed by the commons. This memorable day advanced the nation two centuries in its career, and became a splendid epoch in the progress of liberty. Already the state of things seemed to announce a forced union of the orders. Already a minority, weak indeed as to numbers, defended the cause of their country in the chamber of the nobility. The clergy were still more divided: a great number of parish ministers had joined the commons; and finally, that order, by a majority of one hundred and forty-nine votes against a hundred and twenty-six, determined on the verification of their powers in common. The court, and most of the dissidents, tried every method to avoid the entire and immediate union of the orders. M. d'Eprémefnil even went so far as to propose, what was evidently impossible, a dissolution of the States General. The court was at Marly, and M. Necker at Paris with his sister-in-law, who was at the point of death; and thus the king was left exposed to all the snares which were laid for him. This is not the place to introduce the king's character; but it

is at least certain that M. Necker ought, in such a crisis, to have procured immediate information of events as they arose. Even at Paris he could not have been ignorant of them, and whatever may be the claims of relationship, they ought not to be put in the balance against those of patriotism. He might not perhaps have been able to resist the torrent of the court; but he ought to have hazarded every thing in the attempt. Whilst M. Necker thought he was governing the assembly and the court, he was himself governed by the tempest, and finally became sensible of his own inferiority. Another heavy charge which has been brought against him is, that he afterwards participated in the imprudent, not to say infamous, declaration of the royal sitting of the 23d of June, the tone of which alone he disapproved. He wished to satisfy every body, and knew not that this is the certain method to satisfy nobody. Meanwhile private meetings were constantly held amongst the nobility and the clergy, particularly by the queen and her party; and every thing seemed to announce a violent contest between the national force and the royal authority.

On the 20th of June, the day on which the clergy were to have joined the national assembly,

bly, it was signified by a proclamation of the herald-at-arms, that the sittings of the national assembly were suspended, and that the king would hold a royal sitting on the 22d. This intelligence spread a general consternation over Versailles, and still more over Paris. Some spies of the police were murdered at the Palais-Royal, and some abbés were beaten and ducked. The agitation increased every moment. On a sudden the hall of the States General at Versailles was surrounded with soldiers; the deputies arrived one after the other, and testified the most lively indignation at finding the doors closed against them. Upon this M. Bailly, president of the national assembly, invited them to assemble at the Tennis Court in the street of Old Versailles, where he himself awaited them. The deputies immediately obeyed, and the Tennis Court instantly assumed a more august character than a royal palace. It was here that they took the glorious oath never to separate, and to resist, even to death, tyranny and tyrants.

Before we detail the successive plots of the court, and the terrible events which pressed one upon another with unexampled rapidity, several questions of the most interesting nature present themselves to our consideration. It is probable
enough

enough that, if the nobility in general had pursued the patriotic, and we may add the politic conduct, upon which those of Dauphiné at first acted; if at least they had maintained their pretensions with less obstinacy, they would have preserved many of their privileges, and prevented a long train of disasters. In the next place, the court would probably have prevented an open rupture between the monarch and the constituent or legislative power, if it had declared itself in favour of the *Tiers-Etat*. The king ought in the very beginning to have commanded an union, which the resistance of the commons plainly proved to be inevitable. Thus would he have put himself at the head of the commons, and as we may say at the head of the revolution; he would have prevented the two higher orders from making any exaggerated pretensions; and instead of being forced along by the general impulse of events, he would in some sort have directed their course. But for this purpose it was necessary to know the whole force of circumstances, the whole energy of the nation, and, above all, the fervour of certain minds; it was necessary to allow no time for the perversion of opinion, or the predominance of passion; it was necessary to consult the inclina-

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tions of the *Tiers-Etat*, as in England the peers accommodate themselves to the commons. Instead of this, the king held an imperious sitting, the *seance royale*, which was put off from the 22d to the 23d. Measures were taken to dissolve, perhaps to punish, the legislative body. A few days afterwards a second insult was offered to the nation, by the dismissal of the ministers who enjoyed their confidence, and the nomination of others whose inclinations were as much devoted to despotism, as their names were to hatred and contempt. The high aristocracy, both clerical and nobles, as well as the aristocracy of finance and of the law, at the same time affected so much fullness, or, as they thought, dignity, that they seemed to disdain worshipping the same God, and frequenting the same altars as the commons. They did not perceive that a total change had taken place in ideas, in words, and in things; that what was now on the eve of accomplishment had been preparing for above a century; and that the moment of resistance on our part had arrived. They did not perceive until after the royal sitting, the particulars of which we shall presently mention, that the constituent assembly advanced, at least at that period, with all the power of

of genius and reason, and with all the support of a vast empire. Even the passive obedience of the troops was not certain. Already some soldiers had disobeyed their orders, in forming a guard for the representatives of the people at the Tennis Court. At Paris some of the French guards were conducted to the Palais Royal, where they were caressed, treated, and regaled with a profusion of coffee, lemonade, and cordials. Information was given, that twelve of them were confined in the *Abbaye* prison; and the people hastened to release and bear them in triumph to the Palais Royal. In the evening of the 23d a furious crowd collected around the castle of Versailles, and penetrated even into the apartments, demanding with loud outcries to see M. Necker, who had not appeared at the royal sitting of that day. When the military guard was ordered to restrain the people by force, the soldiers remained immovable. The king and his council, struck with terror, immediately wrote to M. Necker, intreating him to hasten to the castle. Upon his shewing himself to the people, they were appeased; but the multitude turned their rage against the most obstinate of the priests and of the nobles; and the Archbishop of Paris owed his life only to the strength and swiftness of his horses. This was only the

prelude to those disastrous consequences which the despotic measures of the court tended to produce.

To avoid interrupting the chain of events, we have deferred speaking of the instructions of the three orders, instructions which were to contain what were formerly called the complaints or petitions of the people. We behold in them all the abuses and oppressions under which the people laboured; and the perusal of these sacred monuments of national suffering proves that a people, oppressed and plundered for upwards of fourteen centuries, has the whole work of renovation to perform when it awakes from its lethargy. The powers confided to the deputies were determinate and limited. But it was easy to perceive the disadvantages which might arise on many important occasions from this limitation of powers. Many of the nobles had taken an oath, never to vote but in a separate assembly of their own order; whilst, on the contrary, the greater part of the *Tiers-Etat* had sworn not to deliberate except in union with the clergy and nobility, and to vote not by orders, but individually. The instructions given to the deputies ought to have been only in the form of advice; and not have included a restriction on the free delivery of their suffrages.

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It is thus that in England, and in the United States of America, the instructions are not obligatory on the deputies. In order to enjoy all the advantages of the system of representation, the nation must renounce every direct exercise of the right of sovereignty; by a direct participation it produces a constitutional error, a deformity and a void in the general system. The representatives are no longer free. Is it possible for a deputy to have an opinion of his own, when that which he must support is prescribed to him? Must not his knowledge and his conduct be often placed in opposition to each other, by the necessity of voting sometimes from his own judgment, and sometimes from that of others? May not each district give instructions, which from local considerations are, or appear useful; but which are hostile to the general good? And do not circumstances themselves continually vary? Besides, the people at large, in general, judge hastily, and are seldom able to embrace a question in its full extent. Though, therefore, inconvenience might at times occur from an unlimited freedom of suffrage, it seems evident, that there is a much less quantity of evil on this part of the alternative than on the other.

Even though it should be allowed that a restriction of powers renders the legislature more

simple, it ought not, at least, to take place in forming a national convention, or constituent body; because the labours of such a body ought to be submitted to the revision and definitive approbation of those by whom the power was delegated, as was done in America, and has since been done in France.

BOOK VIII.

Particulars of the Royal Sitting.—The National Hall is restored to the Representatives of the People.—Celebrated Answer of Mirabeau to the Grand Master of the Ceremonies.—Homage paid by the People to M. Necker.—The King commands the Two Orders to unite with the Tiers-Etat.—Project of dissolving the National Assembly.—Great Preparations for Hostilities against Paris and the States General.—The first Labours of the Representatives of the People.—Dismission of M. Necker.—Picture of the Capital.—Heroism of the French Guards.—Orgies and Feasts of the Court.—Reflections on their Conduct and Intentions.—Paris becomes the Seat of War.

THE agitation of the public mind, and the insurrection of the people, had caused the national

tional hall to be restored to the commons; and the royal sitting, together with the declarations to which it had given birth, were already regarded as not having happened. This sitting was in fact only calculated to irritate all those who were not ready to bend their necks servilely to the yoke of oppression: it was a real divan, held by a Turkish despot. The king employed no other expressions than *I will, I forbid, I command*. The rights of the people were treated as favours conferred by him: and finally, he ordered the deputies to separate, and to repair to the chambers assigned to their respective orders.

The deputies of the nobility, and a part of those of the clergy retired; the others remained still in their places. M. de Brézé, grand-master of the ceremonies, appeared, and thus addressed them; "Gentlemen, you know the king's intentions." "Yes, Sir, answered Mirabeau, "we have heard the intentions that have been suggested to the king; and as to you, who cannot be his organ to the States General, you who have here neither place nor voice, nor right to speak, it is not your business to remind us of his discourse. But to avoid all mistake and all delay, I declare, that

“ if you are charged to dismiss us from hence,
“ you must obtain orders to employ force, for
“ we will yield our seats only to the power of
“ the bayonet.” All the deputies unanimously
cried, “ Such is the determination of the
“ assembly.”

Mirabeau then proposed to declare the persons of the deputies to the States General inviolable. This motion was adopted. On the next day the majority of the clergy came to share their labours; and on the 25th, forty-nine members of the nobility, amongst whom was M. d'Orleans, came also to join them. The king, terrified at the consequences which the royal sitting had already produced, wrote to the presidents of the nobility and clergy, to invite them to unite with the commons; he even concluded by ordering this measure. The clergy obeyed without hesitation; but the nobility appeared inclined to resist, when M. de Luxembourg, their president, read to them some extracts of a letter from the Count d'Artois, in which he asserted, that the life of the king depended on this union. Every thing yielded to this motive; and on the 27th of June the two orders joined the third in the hall. In the evening

ing the city was illuminated, and the night was spent in rejoicings. The people, easily deceived, ran to the castle, shouting *Long live the king!* and *Long live the queen!* An immense crowd next hastened to the house of M. Necker, whom they regarded as the tutelary deity of France. The same multitude went also to pay homage to the patriotism which they thought they beheld in Messrs. d'Orleans and Montmorin, and to the courage of M. de Bailly.

This public joy did not continue long. The court took advantage of the agitation which prevailed at Paris to draw the troops thither. The king sent for Marshal de Broglie from Lorraine. The foreign regiments were chosen, in preference, for this service, and were attended with an immense train of artillery: those regiments were the most part Swiss, German, or Irish. Thirty-five thousand men were distributed between Versailles and the capital, and twenty thousand more were expected. Already were the camps marked out, and positions chosen for the batteries. All the communications were intercepted; all the passages secured. The despotism was, nevertheless, at that moment as weak as it would have been ferocious, had it prevailed.

vailed. All these soldiers came in crowds to see Paris, with which they were unacquainted: they were immediately conducted to the Palais Royal, and treated with the same liberality as the French guards. Pamphlets, political journals, and caricatures, multiplied on all sides. Public opinion elevated her formidable voice, and already threatening accents were heard, confused murmurs re-echoed, even in the palaces of the tyrants.

The three orders were indeed physically united; but their minds were more divided than ever: the powers had been verified in common; but the voting by orders was insisted on, as the only constitutional mode of proceeding. The minority of the clergy even entered protests. Some nobles also affected a mysterious conduct on this subject: but the assembly disregarded their intrigues and their refusal to vote, and occupied itself on the great questions of the limited powers, and of admitting deputies from the colonies. M. de la Fayette laid on their table the plan of a declaration of the rights of man and a citizen. It was decided that a new president should be elected once a fortnight, taken indifferently from either of the orders. Every thing bore the appearance of

of tranquillity from the 25th of June to the 10th of July following. The assembly, fluctuating between apprehension and security, appeared to conceive only light shades of doubt and suspicion; they thought, or seemed to think, that the executive power was intent only on the public safety. Every thing conduced to weaken the impression of terror which the camps that were forming between Paris and Versailles might have excited. The eleven French guards that had been delivered from the *Abbaye* were, in consequence of a deliberation held at the Palais Royal, reconducted to prison, and afterwards pardoned by the king and set at liberty. But this calm was the prelude of a tempest. The disorders had ceased, Paris was perfectly tranquil; to what purpose then was this multiplication of camps, this aggregation of foreign soldiery? Why this menacing display of military force? The States General were invested like a besieged town. At length the assembly perceived the extent of its danger; and addressed a number of petitions and remonstrances to the king for the removal of these troops, whose presence could not but alarm the capital and the provinces, and restrain the freedom of deliberation. The only answer of the king was an offer to transfer the sittings of the States to Noyon or Soissons, and to go himself to
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Compiègne; an answer full of doubt, and containing a bitter sarcasm, which proved to the most prejudiced eyes the duplicity of the king's character. M. Sabattier, a counsellor in the great chamber of the parliament of Paris, expressed very well the perfidy and false benevolence of Louis XVI., when he said to his colleagues, "I have attentively observed the king's character; you may look on him as a second Louis XI.*"

M. de Mirabeau proved to the assembly how little reliance ought to be put on the word of the king; and shewed at the same time all the perfidy of his answer. "To transfer us," said he, "to Noyon or Soissons, would be to place us between two or three bodies of troops, those which invest Paris, and those which would be marched against us from Flanders and Alsace. We have not," added he, "asked permission of the king to fly from the troops; but we have asked that the troops should be

* An incident which we have received from a person of veracity will exemplify the character of Louis XVI.: He killed with his own hand a cat of which Madame de Lamballe was very fond, and which he had caused to be caught; and afterwards he affected to make inquiries of Madame de Lamballe about her cat, thus adding hypocrisy to cruelty.

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“ removed from the capital, not on our own account, but because they alarm the citizens, and may occasion the greatest evils” The assembly did not adopt the motion which M. de Mirabeau afterwards made, to insist upon the immediate removal of the troops.

We were, however, at the eve of a general explosion. No one could measure, without shuddering, the depth of that abyss into which we were ready to plunge. Paris, deprived of provision, was in danger of being wasted by famine, and subjugated by the sword. The conspirators, thinking themselves sure of success, made it their public boast; and the aristocracy, insolent and contemptuous, doubted not that a populace whom they despised, would be easily crushed by one of our most renowned generals with an army of fifty thousand men.

The night of the 14th of July had been fixed upon for the assault of Paris. The invalids, by firing on the people, were to prevent them from seizing the arms and cannon. At the same instant the brigades encamped in the *Champ de Mars*, and composed of the Swiss regiments of Salis-Samade, Chateaufieux, and Diesbach, the hussars of Berchiny and Esterhazy, and the royal dragons,

dragoons, were to support the invalids with artillery, whilst another body of light troops attacked the *Hotel de Ville* and seized the magistrates and sheriffs. At the first cannon shot, the Prince of Lambesc was to enter the street of *Saint Honoré* with the *Royal Allemand* and other regiments of cavalry, sword in hand, with orders to charge every one who should oppose them, and to make themselves masters of the *Place de Grève*. At the same shot, the regiments of Provence and Vintimille would have advanced from Neuilly, those of Royal-Cravatte, Helmstadt, and Royal-Pologne, from Sivre and Meudon, and these would have been followed by four regiments of chasseurs, destined to seize the gate of *Saint Antoine*, whilst three regiments with their cannon would have taken that called *d'Enfer*. Six thousand banditti were to have spread themselves through the city, and to have augmented the disorder by setting fire to the Hotel de Bretonvilliers, and some of the public offices. Meanwhile the regiments of Besançon and *la Fère* would have thundered upon Paris from the heights of Montmartre with fifty pieces of artillery. All these facts, it will be said, are not proved; but they have at least the strongest appearance of probability; and the conduct of this same court in firing on the people, at the castle of the Thuilleries

on the celebrated day of the 10th of August, (though in this latter instance they were indeed attacked,) must convince the most incredulous, that so numerous an assemblage of troops was only made with views of despotism and of vengeance. But these blood-thirsty projects of a corrupt and ferocious court had no effect, and in the event the punishment soon recoiled upon the authors of the crime.

Too much or too little prudence generally defeats the projects of the greatest criminals. The precipitance of some of the principal conspirators was the salvation of France. The dismissal of M. Necker had been fixed for the night of the 14th of July, the period which was appointed for the execution of this vast plot; but it was thought to be a great point to hasten the removal of the minister.

On the 11th, M. d'Artois obtained the dismissal of M. Necker, who received orders to quit the kingdom in twenty-four hours, with the utmost possible secrecy and dispatch: and he set off at six o'clock the next morning for Brussels, the road which led most quickly to the frontiers. When M. de Breteuil obtained the dismissal of M. de Calonne, that minister received the information

formation with transports of rage ; when the Count d'Artois had prevailed on the king to dismiss M. Necker, the latter did not lose for a moment his habitual serenity. Let us add, that this was the second time that the king had disgraced the same minister, who, he well knew, was the most agreeable of any to the people.

The preparations for slaughter increased every day : at Versailles the body guards were continually on horseback ; the Swiss guards surrounded the castle ; the German troops were posted at that part of the king's palace which was called the *Orangery*. It was known that the cannoneers had received orders to hold themselves constantly in readiness ; but it was not generally known that they declared they would not fire either upon the assembly or the citizens. The other troops were scarcely any more to be depended upon. We have already shewn that the Parisians had attached a great number of the soldiers to the cause of the nation. Two companies of grenadiers of the French guards had refused to march against the people. M. de Valadi, formerly an officer of that brave legion, and one of the most zealous apostles of liberty, perhaps also paid by Orleans, went from barrack to barrack to enlighten the soldiers with regard to the real duties of men, and
what

what they owed to their country and to humanity. We shall see that his zeal was not without success. The commanders, whose apprehensions were naturally excited, ordered the troops, from Saturday the 21st of June, to keep within their barracks. On the 25th and 26th, whole battalions quitted them, and came by hundreds to Paris, where they entered the Palais Royal, in order, two by two, with acclamations of *Long live the Tiers-Etat!*

A good and sound policy will never hazard an exertion of authority without a certainty of being able to support it. The king's council does not seem to have been fully sensible of this important truth. The dismissal of M. Necker was the work of a set of men, part of whom had resolved to risk every thing for the maintenance of their pretended prerogatives, and the satisfaction of their hatred against the minister. They could not fear his being able to shake the resolutions of the monarch, and to cause a failure of their plan; because the Archbishop of Vienne, at the head of a deputation from the national assembly, had, in an eloquent and forcible discourse, in vain shewn the king all the consequences of his perseverance in keeping together so large an assemblage of forces. The little suc-

cess of this deputation, and of the observations made to the king, is an additional proof that his faults arose from a harsh and despotic character, and not from a want of information. At all events the dismissal of M. Necker at such a moment was an unpardonable error. The whole plan ought at the same time to have been forwarded some days in its execution; so that the soldiers might not have had time to be won over and enlightened by the other party. There are enterprises in which it is necessary to be abrupt: and the result would have been more certain before the 14th of July, with an inferiority of twenty thousand men, than on the 14th with that reinforcement.

As to the hostile intentions of the court, although, as we have already said, they cannot be doubted; yet the impartiality of history demands that we should notice here what its partizans allege in support of the contrary opinion. They say that the excesses of the Parisians, the enterprises of the furious demagogues, and the money so profusely scattered at the Palais Royal by M. d'Orleans, all together forced the court to take precautions for its own safety. They add, that this great army, far from shewing a disposition to attack, was afterwards dismissed, and retired without a contest, when the Parisians, and particularly the

the French guards, as we shall soon see, marched against it. These reasons are not in our opinion strong enough to overbalance those which tend to prove the court guilty of an intention, not only to dissolve by force the national assembly, but to execute plans of signal vengeance. It is, besides, false to say that the troops did not attack the citizens: they attacked them in the affair of Neckers's bust. The wanton and scandalous orgies in which the court, when intent on massacre, indulged themselves; those which the king and queen afterwards, and on another occasion, animated with their presence, and in which the white cockades were mounted, all together concur to unmask the murderous projects of the king and his counsellors.

The king chose as members of his new council Messrs. de Breteuil, Foulon, La Galassiere, Laporte, and the Marshal de Broglie. Some of these ministers have since been accused of having said that Paris ought to be mowed like a meadow, and that it should be given up to the pillage of the troops. But although they were mostly men very hostile to the popular party, and very immoral in their principles, such accusations as these ought not, without the fullest proof, to be admitted by the historian.

When it was known at Versailles and at Paris that the king had refused, on the 11th, to send away the troops, and that, on the 12th, M. Necker had received orders to give in his resignation, all eyes were opened; their suspicions were no longer mixed with doubt, but the foresight of the future was reduced to certainty. The agitation was particularly extreme at Paris. Frenchmen, whose ardent, lively, and volatile passions are generally more apt to burst out in words and actions, than to produce, by their internal compression, a silent fermentation, were so struck with this intelligence, so petrified with astonishment, that they seemed unlike themselves. The first person that brought the news did not meet with belief, and was likely to have paid dear for his zeal. Men who were together detached themselves from each other, they separated in silence, and were insensibly dispersed. At length the fatal news was spread through this populous city, and flew from mouth to mouth. At the same time intelligence was received, that a man, odious from his arbitrary principles, and from the violence of his character, was nominated the new prime minister. Multitudes collected together; they crowded to the Palais Royal by all its entrances; the orators mounted upon chairs, or on the branches of trees

trees in the garden, and from thence thundered forth their declamations. Then began to operate, without chiefs, without design, without system, but by the force of circumstances alone, that most astonishing revolution, so fruitful in political miracles, both of virtue and vice; a revolution, which sooner or later will change the face of the globe, will hasten the liberty of Asia, expel the English from India, regenerate the Mahometans, break the chains of those wretched Africans whom we burn slowly, and without remorse, at the foot of our sugar canes, as at a stake, merely because they are blacks; a revolution, in short, which will give freedom to the Indians of Peru and Mexico, and will penetrate to the extremities of Chili and Terra-del-Fuego.

The first sounds which were heard at the Palais Royal were sounds of lamentation and of mourning. From these groups, united by the common sensation of grief, orders were issued to the different theatres to interrupt and suspend their performances. Who at that time commanded? Who issued these orders? Only simple citizens. And yet these orders were respected. In the summer season all the inhabitants of this city, that are at all easy in their cir-

cumstances, disperse themselves every Saturday evening, or Sunday morning, amongst those numerous villages and country-houses, with which the environs of Paris abound. There were, perhaps, two hundred thousand persons out of the city, giving themselves up to recreation, to joy, and pleasure, who, in the midst of their security, little thought of the scenes which were acting around their dwellings. Let any one represent to himself the astonishment, the distress, the anguish of this multitude of men, women, and children, who, returning in the evening precipitately, on foot, in carriages, and on horseback, met nothing but cannon, soldiers, a furious populace, the barriers already in flames, and every thing bearing the appearance of robbery and terror. Those who passed by the square of Louis XV. and the *Champs Elysées* heard the report of musquetry; and beheld battalions of a foreign soldiery charging the citizens and pursuing them as far as the Thuilleries; the Prince of Lambesc leading on the troops; and all this because the people had thrown a few stones at them. This princely barbarian wounded with his sabre an old man who was walking peaceably along. The persons who were bearing triumphantly through the streets of Paris the busts of M. Necker and M. d'Orleans, who, it was said, was
to

to be banished, did not throw any stones: and yet the soldiers of the Royal-Allemand received orders to attack them, and struck with their sabres the insensible busts. Many persons were wounded. The firing of cannon was heard, the *tocfin* sounded, and all Paris was in motion, and crying *to arms!*

The French guards were the first to present a regular opposition: they gave, as it were, the first impulse to the revolution. Some Swiss guards, and some picquets of foreign cavalry, mostly Germans, occupied different posts. About nine o'clock in the evening the French guards left their barracks, in spite of their officers, and assembled in great force on the *Boulevards*. There, advancing in good order, they attacked the regiment of Royal-Allemand, and killed three dragoons at the first discharge. There appears to have been as little order and consistency in the plans of attack formed at Versailles, as there were in those of defence formed at Paris: every thing seemed to proceed as chance directed. Perhaps the troops of the court had orders not to fire until the concerted signal was given, and when they might all act at once. Thus these brave dragoons of the Royal-Allemand, who, indeed, were not in force, received intre-

pidly the fire of the French guards, without returning it, and then retreated to the square of Louis XV., where the greatest part of their regiment was posted, together with some dragoons, a few hussars, and a corps of Swiss.

About eleven o'clock the French guards repaired to the Palais Royal, to the number of twelve hundred, concerted measures together, and, without either officers or artillery, determined to march to the square of Louis XV., and drive from thence the regular troops which occupied it. Their victory was not bloody, The troops thought proper to make no more resistance there than they had done in the Boulevards. They retired to Versailles, and their example was followed by the rest of the regular troops in the city.

The state of Paris at this time in some measure brought to mind, if not the savage origin of the human race, at least the first formation of societies. That city found itself, on a sudden, without government, without a head, without guards, police, patrols, justice, public worship, or public amusements. An army of between thirty and forty thousand men blockaded the city, and cut off all communication with Versailles

faillies and the States General. They knew neither what was passing at the court, nor among the states; and the latter were equally ignorant of what was passing at Paris. Numbers of banditti, attracted by the hope of pillage, flowed from all parts into this great town, like ravens and birds of prey, drawn from far by the scent of carnage, towards a plain which war has heaped with carcases. Twenty thousand men of all nations, without bread, without work, without means of obtaining a livelihood, who used to be employed in cutting passages into the mountain of Montmartre, augmented the danger by swelling the crowd of vagabonds. The hideous spectre of famine seemed about to lift its head in Paris. Perhaps this was the plan of the court. Perhaps they wished to gain Paris by famine, without the hazard and disgrace of having attacked it with the sword. Perhaps, also (for nothing is incredible) they resolved to defer marching the troops, until a pretence of restoring order should be given by the plunder, which seemed inevitable in so large a city, and which would deliver them from any opposition, or any suspicion of perfidy.

How much does the sensation of common danger unite and equalize mankind! and how
firm

firm a bond of friendship are great calamities! Within and without the Palais Royal, and in the streets, men were continually accosting each other, continually talking and interchanging civilities. Known or unknown, rich or poor, nobles or plebeians, they spoke, they asked questions, they communicated their ideas, their hopes, and their fears. They were like a large family who had just lost, by death, their common father; or like voyagers collected together in the same vessel on the approach of a tempest, or cast on the shore after a common shipwreck.

The electors, who had nominated the deputies of Paris to the States General, conceived the happy idea of assembling all the inhabitants of the city, and forming them into a body for the defence of property, in the sixty churches, or respective districts in which the elections had four months before been made. M. de Mirabeau had some time before proposed to the States General to create a city militia, to repress the disorders, and assure the safety of Paris; but his motion was rejected. The idea, however, afforded, at this period, an important lesson, and became the means of saving Paris. That city contained two hundred thousand hands capable of defending her; but there were no chiefs

chiefs to take the command. At the summons of a generous citizen, the electors, at the peril of their lives, assumed authority, and the citizens readily obeyed them. Such a step had now become necessary : already had the banditti, pressed by hunger through the scarcity of bread, which had long been felt, attacked the real or supposed monopolisers, and were just then plundering the house of Saint Lazare. They were driven from thence ; the tocsin sounded ; and every citizen repaired to his district to inscribe his name. The members of the *commune* were dismissed, and new ones chosen ; but the great difficulty was to arm two hundred thousand citizens : all the musquets were taken from the gun-smiths ; swords, sabres, pikes, and warlike instruments of every kind were forged ; the armoury was burst open, and every one carried away some of the antique weapons which had been long stored up there. The French guards, to the number of about three thousand, directed the citizens, and divided themselves into several corps. Their Colonel was the Duke du Châtelet, whom the people and even the soldiers themselves hated, as being harsh, avaricious, and without capacity. This man would have been massacred by the people, but for the interposition of a grenadier, who, covering him with his body, thus addressed the

the

the assailants: "My friends, I will not suffer any harm to be done to our Colonel. Besides, you see that he does not refuse to give up the cannon to you." M. du Châtelet, surprised and affected at this action, asked the grenadier his name: "All my comrades," said he, "have the same name as myself." It must be further remarked, to the honour of the French guards, that they were the first who attacked the banditti whilst plundering the rich *commune* of Saint Lazare. It is evident, that with such sentiments these soldiers could not but act a distinguished part in the revolution. In like manner we shall soon behold, in the attack of the Bastille, instances of no less magnanimity in the conduct both of the people of Paris and of the French guards. We have carefully collected these incidents, in order to sooth those feeling minds which will be wearied at the necessary recital of so many crimes of the court, and so many sufferings of the people. It is thus that the imagination of the traveller repofes with pleasure on some beauteous spot, which rises to his view after a long and gloomy journey through paths environed with rocks and precipices.

BOOK IX.

Siege of the Bastille, which is taken by Storm.—

The most remarkable Particulars attending that great Event.—Fatal Error of the Popular Vengeance.—Various Instances of Magnanimity.

THE representatives of the nation resolved not to separate until they were satisfied with regard to the events which threatened Paris and the whole of the kingdom. The courage and energy of the Parisians equalled the firmness of the national assembly. Scarcely had twenty-four hours elapsed, when sixty thousand men were in arms. The body of electors, and their committees, were permanent, that is to say, they worked night and day, with indefatigable zeal, to procure supplies of provisions, and to produce order from the midst of so much confusion. M. de la Salle was appointed commander of the forces, on the refusal of M. d'Aumont. The green cockade was at first worn; but was soon proscribed, out of hatred to M. d'Artois, whose livery was of that colour; and the blue and rose-coloured ribbons, the colours of the city, were adopted as the distinctive badges of our soldier-citizens, and citizen-foldiers.

soldiers. But the chief want was of musquets and ammunition. Repeated deputations were, therefore, sent to the Prévôt des Marchands, M. de Fleffelles, to distribute the arms which were in the public magazines. M. de Fleffelles was lavish of promises, but performed none of them; on the contrary, he excited a general indignation, by giving false directions with regard to arms, and by distributing parcels of spoiled powder. The danger, however, was pressing; and it was resolved to procure arms at any risk. More than thirty thousand men directed their march toward the *Hotel des Invalides*, the governor of which had both soldiers and artillery, and might, before he yielded, have caused thousands of the citizens to bite the dust; but he would finally have been overcome. The people respected his person, and those of his old warriors. An armed multitude immediately entered at every opening, seized on the cannon, visited the subterraneous apartments, and discovered about fifty thousand arquebusses, sabres, musquets, and pikes: this multitude was immediately organized into a regular army by the French guards, who became its officers.

A more important undertaking was presently resolved on; it was no less than the taking of the Bastille.

Bastille. The time of popular vengeance had arrived: the explosion of liberty was violent in proportion to the long-continued pressure of despotism. This was the grand, the decisive moment of the revolution. This was the spectacle which exhibited, both in its outline and in its details, the most striking sublimity.

M. de Launay, a worthy minister of despotism, was entrusted with the command of the horrid dungeons of the Bastille. Shuddering at the very name of liberty, fearful that, together with the tears of his victims, that torrent of gold would be dried up, which was the object of his desires and the price of their sufferings; the avaricious and cowardly satellite of tyranny had a long while before surrounded himself with arms and with cannon. He employed himself incessantly in procuring means of defence. Fifteen pieces of cannon lined the threatening battlements of the Bastille, and three field-pieces in the great court pointed toward the outer gate, presented a most formidable and terrific appearance. His ammunition consisted of fourteen boxes of canister and grape shot, fifteen hundred cartridges, and two hundred and fifty barrels of powder, each of an hundred and twenty-five pounds weight. Such was the state of his warlike stores on Tuesday the 14th
of

of July; but in procuring these he had neglected to obtain provision; all that he had consisted only of two sacks of flour and a little rice. He had no other supply of water than what proceeded, by means of pipes, from a reservoir without the building; a feeble resource and which might easily be cut off. The amount of his troops was only fourscore invalids and thirty-two Swiss. The castle of the Bastille was flanked by eight large round towers, whose walls were nearly six feet thick. In the morning of the 14th, several deputations came to demand of him peace, and a supply of arms. He received them at the governor's house, assured them of his good intentions, and gave hostages to the people for their security. A great part of the Etat-Major recommended him to take no measures of hostility; but he resolved to employ violence.

From the dawn of that day in which the Bastille was attacked, the cry of "To the Bastille!" "Let us march to the Bastille!" resounded from mouth to mouth, and re-echoed in every quarter of the capital. M. Thuriot de la Rosière, deputed by the district to wait on the governor, went thither, accompanied by two citizens, who stopped at the first bridge whilst he entered alone, and said, "I come in the name of the nation to
" repre-

“ represent to you, that the cannon which are
“ mounted on the towers of the Bastille occasion
“ great uneasiness, and spread terror through-
“ out all Paris; we beg you to have them taken
“ down,” — “ That is not in my power,” said
the governor; “ those pieces have always been
“ fixed on the towers, and I cannot have them
“ dismounted without a special order from the
“ king. Having already been informed of the
“ alarm which they have caused in Paris, I have
“ ordered them to be drawn back from the em-
“ brasures.” The deputy, having with difficulty
obtained the liberty of entering the inner court,
called upon the officers and soldiers in the name
of honour and of their country to yield, and to
change the direction of the cannon. All of them,
by the desire of the governor, swore to make no
use of their arms unless they were attacked.
M. de la Rosière then ascended the towers with
M. de Launay. Arriving at the top of that
which commanded the arsenal, they beheld an
immense crowd of people running together
from all parts, and the whole Fauxbourg of Saint
Antoine advancing in a mass. The governor
turned pale, and seizing M. de la Rosière by the
arm, exclaimed, “ What are you doing, sir?
“ you have assumed a sacred title only to betray
“ me.” — “ Sir,” answered M. de la Rosière,

“ if you continue to use such language, one of us shall soon be thrown down into the fosse.”
The governor was silent.

At that moment the sentinel on guard upon the same tower came to tell them, that the people were preparing to attack the governor's house; and he at the same time intreated M. de la Rozière to shew himself. He immediately advanced to the edge of the parapet; and repeated shouts of applause arose from the garden of the arsenal. He then cast a glance on the cannon, and found that they had been withdrawn about four feet from the embrasures, but that they were still in the same direction, and that they were masked. Fearing to lose moments that were so precious, he determined to retire first to his district, and then to the Hotel de Ville. A considerable number of citizens soon afterwards presented themselves before the Bastille to demand arms and warlike stores. M. de Launay went to meet them, and ordered the draw-bridge to be let down in order to admit them. The most resolute advanced to inform him of the objects of their mission; but they had scarcely entered the first court when the draw-bridge was elevated, and a continued volley of musquetry stretched in the dust a great part of these unfortunate men,
who

who had no means either of defence or escape. Their companions without the walls, shocked at so cowardly a piece of treachery, ran immediately to the Hotel de Ville to relate this instance of barbarity and to demand vengeance.

Instantly an immense multitude, armed with musquets, sabres, swords, and hatchets, hastened to the outer courts. At the same time two men, one of whom was named Louis Tournay, a veteran soldier of the regiment of Dauphiné, climbed upon the roofs of the guard-house, which was close to the draw-bridge. The brave Tournay descended alone into the court of the governor's house, and went to the guard-house to look for the keys of the draw-bridge: not finding them, he called for a hatchet, and broke open the locks and bolts, whilst they were endeavouring to force the gates on the other side. The multitude of assailants around the draw-bridge augmented every moment. The people rushed in crowds into the court of the governor's house, and hastened to the second bridge to seize on it, at the same time making a general discharge of musquetry on the troops. They answered by a brisk and continued fire, which forced the assailants to fall back in disorder. This attack had continued an hour, when on the side of the arsenal was heard

the sound of a drum, accompanied with loud acclamations. At the same instant a flag was seen approaching, escorted by a great number of armed citizens. A vast crowd then advanced toward the governor's house, crying out to the enemy to suspend their fire, as these were deputies from the Hotel de Ville who wished to speak to the governor. Immediately a white flag was hung out from the platform of the towers. Upon this friendly invitation the deputies advanced. One of the multitude shewed them a piece of cannon, which was advanced from one of the embrasures and pointed on them. One of the deputies, M. Francotai, advanced alone with the drum and the flag, in spite of the intreaties of the multitude, who conjured him to go no further; but this intrepid patriot no less eagerly pressed them to retire: they refused to forsake him, and followed his steps. The besieged then poured upon him a discharge of musquetry, which killed two men by his side. The assailants, rendered furious by this proceeding, brought three waggon loads of straw, and set fire to the advanced guard-house, to the governor's house, and to the kitchens. At this moment the besieged fired a cannon loaded with grape shot, the only one, according to their account, which was discharged from the Bastille during a combat of five

hours. The Swiss, who were posted in the great court, had made an opening in the wood-work of the draw-bridge, from whence they poured on the besiegers continual discharges of an arquebuss, which alone killed more persons than all the other pieces of artillery and musquetry together.

The building was still in flames, when a detachment of grenadiers and musqueteers arrived in the court, accompanied by a numerous troop of citizens, commanded by M. Hulin, who had just prevailed on the French guards to march. They advanced with five pieces of cannon, which they brought to the door communicating with the garden of the arsenal, and entered with them into the inner court in spite of the continued fire of the besieged. They planted two cannon in face of the great bridge, and recommenced the attack with redoubled fury. How many traits of heroism marked that grand day of the revolution, a revolution whose splendor will eclipse the most celebrated periods of our former, perhaps even of our future history! Never were so many prodigies of valour displayed by the most hardy veterans, as were acted in that day by an undisciplined multitude. The assailants having carried the first bridge, and placed their cannon in

front of the second, were certain of gaining the fortress. M. de Launay might, without doubt, have made a stronger resistance to the capture of the first bridge; but when he saw himself blocked up, he lost the command of his senses. He hastened to take refuge behind the enormous mass of his bastions; where he hoped to remain in safety until the arrival of the succours which M. de Besenval and M. de Fleffelles had promised to send him that very evening. He wished to save his life and his reputation; and he took the surest means of destroying both the one and the other. Doubtful and fluctuating between hope and fear, he adopted the most dangerous step, that of taking no step at all. At last he gave himself up to despair, seized the match of one of the guns in the inner court, and hastened directly to the gun-room to set fire to it. M. Ferraud, a subaltern officer, presenting his bayonet, drove him back from thence. He then ran to one of the towers where a part of the powder was lodged; but M. Bréquart, another subaltern, obliged him to withdraw, and thus prevented an act of madness which would have cost the lives of thousands of the citizens, and would have overwhelmed by the explosion, the ~~Bastille~~ the neighbouring houses, and great part of the Faubourg of Saint Antoine. The governor, in a
frantic

frantic manner, then begged for a single barrel of powder; but the soldiers answered, that they would rather perish than thus sacrifice the lives of so many of their fellow-citizens, and that resistance being no longer possible, it was necessary to beat a drum on the platform, to hang out a white flag, and to capitulate. It was too late; the people, irritated at the cowardly treachery of the governor, in firing upon the deputies, considered this signal of peace only as a new snare, and advanced, making continual discharges of musquetry, to the inner bridge. They brought three pieces of cannon, and were about to fire; already their ranks opened to leave a passage for the shot, when the enemy, seeing that they meant to batter the great bridge, let down the little temporary draw-bridge, which was on the left of the entrance of the fortress. Notwithstanding the new danger which resulted from this manœuvre, Messrs. Elie, Hulin, Maillard, Réole, Humbert, Tournay, François, Louis Morin, and several others, rushed instantly upon it, after having secured it by fastening the bolts. The French guards, with their accustomed coolness, formed a line on the other side of the bridge to prevent the assailants from crowding upon it. This act of prudence saved the lives of hundreds, who would otherwise have

precipitated themselves into the fosse. About two minutes afterwards an invalid opened the door behind the draw-bridge, and asked what they required? "The surrender of the Bastille," was the general answer. Then he admitted the conquerors, who immediately let down the great bridge. The invalids were ranged on the right, the Swiss on the left. Their arms were laid down along the side of the wall. They took off their hats, clapped their hands, and cried *bravo!* to the besiegers, who entered in crowds. Those who entered first behaved to the vanquished with humanity; but the succeeding multitude, breathing only slaughter and revenge, treated the place as if taken by storm. Some soldiers, stationed on the platforms, and ignorant of their defeat, having at this moment made some discharge of musquetry, the people, transported with rage, rushed upon the invalids, and overwhelmed them with violence. One of them was massacred; it was the unfortunate Bréquart. That brave officer, who had done so great a service to the city of Paris, by stopping the arm of the governor when he would have blown up the Bastille, was pierced with two stabs of a sword, and wounded with a sabre, which cut off his wrist. That hand which had saved the lives
of

of so many citizens was carried in triumph through all the streets of the city. He himself was torn from the fort, and dragged to the Grève. The multitude, taking him for a cannoneer, hung him upon a gibbet, together with one Affelin, the victim, like himself, of a fatal error.

Maillard, Cholet, the grenadier Arné, and some others, dispute the honour of having seized M. de Launay. He was not in an uniform, but in a grey frock, with a crimson ribbon; he bore in his hand a sword-cane, with which he attempted to stab himself, but it was snatched from him by the intrepid Arné. Most of those who escorted de Launay to the Hotel de Ville were near falling victims to the fury of the multitude against their prisoner, and to their own zeal in protecting him from the general violence. But the popular rage increased every moment. Hulin himself, notwithstanding his great size and vigour, could not resist their efforts. Exhausted with the exertions he had made in the defence of de Launay, he was obliged to quit him at the Place de Grève, in order to rest himself a little. Scarcely had he sat down, when, turning round his eyes, he beheld the governor's head fixed on a pike. The people, fearing that
he

he would rescue their victim, instantly butchered him on the steps of the Hotel de Ville.

The invalids were presented to one of the city-officers, who said to them, "You have fired on your fellow-citizens; you deserve death, and you shall be immediately hung." But the French guards, no less humane after the victory than terrible in the combat, besought the people to pardon them. This generous sentiment was applauded, and the consoling exclamations of "Pardon! Pardon!" resounded in every corner of the Grève.

Eager to judge with their own eyes of all that rumour had published concerning the mysteries of these hideous towers, the conquerors rush in crowds into those vast tombs of living victims: they tear down and overturn huge masses of stone, the crash of whose fall strikes every heart with horror, and recalls the idea of the sufferers who have perished in these gloomy dungeons, these terrific caverns of despotism. Others break open the council chamber, that impious tribunal, where the slaves of ministerial vengeance judged without laws, and executed without remorse. A great number ran tumultuously through the prisons, descended into the cells, forced

forced open, with difficulty, the double and triple doors of iron, and plunged into the cold catacombs, dark and silent as the grave. An old iron frame was discovered, so contrived as to confine every joint of a man, and to hold him for ever immovable. Several other machines, no less complex in their construction, no less cruelly destructive and torturing, were exposed to open view ; but no person could divine either their names, or peculiar use ; these were among the secrets of the Phalarises of Versailles, and their hired executioners. Seven prisoners were discovered, and conducted in triumph to the Palais Royal. These unfortunate men believed themselves under the illusion of a dream. Such are the principal circumstances of that memorable action, the success of which appeared incredible even to those who were spectators of it. " I know not," says Mirabeau, speaking of the state-prisons, " whether it be possible for
" the mind and the body long to support the
" torments which are inflicted there ; but I believe, that we should be struck with horror
" could we peruse a faithful list of those who
" die through despair, or who live raging mad,
" in these infernal habitations."

BOOK X.

M. de Flesselles convicted of Treachery.—The People sacrifice him to their Rage.—Manner in which the News of the taking of the Bastille was received at Versailles.—M. de Liancourt prevails on the King to confide himself to the National Assembly.—M. Bailly is appointed Mayor of Paris, and M. de la Fayette Commander of the Parisian National Guard.—The King comes to Paris.—His Appearance at the Hotel de Ville.—He accepts the tri-colored Cockade.—His Return to Versailles.—Stratagem of M. Foulon.—His Death, and that of M. Berthier, his Son-in-Law.—Agitation, panic Fear, and arming throughout the Kingdom.—Persons suspected to be the Authors of these Events.—Excesses of the Peasantry against the Seignorial Lords.

THE indolence of the Parisians, moulded to the yoke, and nurtured in the cap of luxury and servitude, had passed into the souls of their oppressors; whilst the ferocity of their tyrants seemed to have infused itself into the bosoms of a people naturally mild and benevolent. The moment in which all the inclinations which have been formed in one direction forcibly recoil to the

the opposite side, is always a terrible moment. Another great criminal was soon executed. A letter had been found on M. de Launay, which proved his secret correspondence with M. de Fleffelles, the provost of Paris. It left no doubt of his perfidy. "I amuse the Parisians," says M. de Fleffelles, "with cockades and promises, keep firm till evening, and you shall have a reinforcement." This letter was presented to him at the Hotel de Ville; he turned pale, and wished to go out to justify himself, or rather to frame some excuse, probably by alleging the orders of a superior. He requested to speak to the people assembled in the Place de Grève, where the Hotel de Ville is situated. Two citizens took him by the arm and supported him as far as the steps, where a young man, advancing from the crowd, presented his pistol at him, exclaiming, "Traitor, thou shalt go no further!" M. de Fleffelles fell dead on the spot; and the people dragged him along the square, cut off his hands, mangled his body, cut off his head, and in their rage trampled him to pieces.

The taking of the Bastille was a thunder-stroke to the court; the first intelligence of it was received at Versailles as an imposture. When the conspirators were fully assured of this event,

event, they took the desperate resolution of proceeding to extremities. They dispatched courier after courier to the different places where the troops were quartered; but the soldiers refused to obey. The critical moment was lost. Marshal de Broglio sent word, that the cannoneers had declared they would not fire. "Well, said the ministers, "press the blockade of Paris." The General replied, "That he could not rely on the "army." Two days before, they had begun to stop the supplies of provision going to Paris; an additional proof that they had formed the atrocious project of reducing that city by famine, if they could not effect their purpose by force of arms. How different was the conduct of Henry IV., who, in a cause as just as theirs was infamous, himself supplied the besieged with provisions! The events which were passing at Paris were concealed from the king, who was even shewn every day false bills of the theatres. This arose from an apprehension, that if he had known the dangerous situation of the court, the weakness of his character would have made him adopt another line of conduct. It was not his tenderness for the people that they feared; for if the Parisians had been conquered, they would have hastened to carry him a piece of news so agreeable in his eyes.

Whilst

Whilst the courtiers still dared to hope for the subjection of France, and even celebrated it beforehand by their impious orgies, the national representatives, labouring day and night for the public good, had not quitted the hall of the States General from Sunday morning till Wednesday. The benches of that hall had been, during those three days, their tables and their beds. They had shewn the same courage which the Roman senators of old displayed on the approach of the Gauls. They once more sent a deputation to the king, to enlighten him, but still without success. It must be confessed that it was no easy task to enlighten such a monarch; and yet it is contended that he was all the while deceived, though he possessed so many means of detecting the deceit had he been so inclined.

Upon the repeated refusals of the king to listen to the States General, the Duke de Liancourt, keeper of the wardrobe, (one of those servile offices which the pretended *great* were mean enough to occupy, and at the same time a member of the assembly on the side of the minority,) took the resolution of waiting on the king at midnight. He gave him the first information of every thing that had happened at Paris, of the

the great events of the day, and of the capture of the Bastille about seven o'clock in the evening; finally he shewed him all the danger which threatened his own person and the royal family. The king yielded to the force of M. de Liancourt's reasoning, and came the next day with his two brothers to put himself into the hands of the national assembly, and to be regulated by their councils. It was immediately decided that the army should be sent to the frontiers, and that M. Necker should be recalled.

When the king left the hall, the whole assembly hastened to follow him, and the deputies of the three orders, hand in hand, accompanied him to the castle, with the acclamations of an immense multitude, who crowded round them and filled the air with shouts of *Vive le Roi!*

In the midst of their progress, a woman forced her way through the deputies, and throwing herself at the feet of the king, cried "Oh, sire! oh, my king! are you sincere in what you are doing? Will it not be again as it was a fortnight ago?"—"No," answered the monarch, "no, my good woman, it will always be thus. Never, never shall I change my conduct, to my latest breath."

When

When they arrived at the castle, the queen, who was standing in a balcony, and holding the dauphin in her arms, pressed him to her breast, and then presented to the people this child, who was even then considered as the hope of the nation. We cannot but own that the constituent body acted amiss in accompanying the king to the castle; it would have been sufficient, on this occasion, to have sent a deputation: the sovereign, by this step, acted inconsistently toward the prince, and descended from the dignity of a great nation.

The day of his recall was to M. Necker a proud day: it was perhaps the most glorious triumph ever enjoyed by a mortal. The only event in ancient history which can be compared to it was the exile of Cicero, which afforded him nearly a similar triumph. M. Necker had not been four days dismissed, when the whole French nation cried aloud for his recall. The States General and the king both dispatched couriers after him by different routes, lest they should miss him; and these couriers bore the most pressing letters to engage him to return, and to obviate his objections; as if the fate of the empire depended on his presence alone. M. Necker partly deserved these honours, if not for his ge-

nus, at least, for having a long while supported twenty-five millions of men; and that, in a great measure, by his personal credit.

At Paris M. Bailly was chosen mayor, the title of provost * having become universally odious; and M. de la Fayette was chosen commander in chief of the national guard of the metropolis. The city presented, at this moment, a most striking spectacle. Twenty-four deputies of the national assembly arrived from Versailles, in the midst of an immense multitude of people who lined the whole road: in Paris itself a hundred thousand men in arms waited to receive them. The intoxication of patriotism, the transports of joy, the overflowing sensibility of general benevolence and fraternity, animated every countenance, and appeared in every gesture. The Place de Grève had, at that time, become the *forum* of the French people. Hither the deputies repaired to inform them of the measure which the king had adopted, in giving himself up to the national assembly.

The people added to their shouts of joy the expression of two other wishes; one was, to see within their walls a king, whom they persisted in supposing to be only weak and ill-advised; the

* *Prevôt des Marchands.*

other,

other, was the return of M. Necker. The monarch, instructed by the deputies, on their return, of the wish of the Parisians, informed the assembly, that he would repair on the following day (Thursday) to their Hall; and, as if every kind of triumph had been reserved to that day, the dissentients of the two superior orders, in the morning, declared themselves sensible of their error.

On Thursday morning the king was expected at Paris; but intelligence was brought, that he would not come on that day, his arrival being deferred till Friday. No one would believe this information. The Parisians coolly observed, " If the king does not come to Paris, we have
" only one plan to pursue; it is to form four
" divisions of twenty thousand men each, and
" march straight to Versailles." At three o'clock in the morning orders were given out at all the districts, and before seven o'clock a hundred and fifty thousand citizens were under arms. The inhabitants of Versailles had also armed themselves, with the intention of escorting the king as far as Sèvres, and there delivering him to the national militia of Paris. Four or five hundred deputies of the three orders were to accompany him. The king, notwithstanding the en-

treaties of the queen, was determined to keep the promise which he had given. The people and the national guard were instructed, during the king's progress, to cry nothing but *Vive la Nation* ! The king reached the Hotel de Ville, through a long range of pikes and drawn swords. M. Bailly received him in the great hall, where the electors of Paris, the commissioners of the city, and an immense concourse of spectators were assembled. The king seated himself in a chair of state prepared for him, whilst M. Bailly, presenting to him the keys of the city, addressed him in the following words: " Sire, I offer to your
" majesty the keys of your good city of Paris :
" they are the same which were presented to
" Henry IV. : he had regained his people ; now
" it is the people who have regained their king." A just and happy thought ! which ought to have terminated his speech ; for what addition could strengthen so forcible a sentence ? The king received from the hands of the mayor the cockade of three colours, and the cries of *Vive le Roi* re-founded on all sides. At the barriers he was again joined by the escort which had brought him to Paris ; and on his return to Versailles he beheld only the transports of a joy which rose almost to delirium. So easy is it for a king to regain the love of his people !

Here ends the history of this revolution, or rather this insurrection, which embraces a space of six days. What follows is only its development, its extension, its consequence; but from this moment the triumph of liberty over despotism seemed assured, or at least the greatest shock was past: to annul this triumph required no less than a civil war, a general explosion; it required a second Cromwell. I know no epoch in the history of states, ancient or modern, which presents so striking a picture. This, however, is but the opening of those grand scenes which offer themselves successively to our view, and which, though, perhaps, less decisive, yet, if considered in all their various relations, are scarcely less interesting.

Within the last three days, the nobles, the favourites, the ministers, and their agents, had all fled, with trembling speed, from a kingdom which they meant to have offered up upon the altar of pride and ambition. The Marshal de Broglio hastened to Luxembourg to hide the disgrace with which he had covered his old age. Foulon endeavoured to escape the popular vengeance by a feigned death; and caused a servant, who died at his estate of Houvion, to be interred in his name. Madame de Polignac en-

deavoured to elude discovery by flying in the disguise of a chambermaid. Lenoir, Valentin, Villedeuil, and some others, preserved their lives by a hasty retreat. The princes of the blood went to beg an asylum among foreign powers; the Count d'Artois, and the Prince de Condé, escaping under favour of the shades of night. But M. Foulon, and his son-in-law, M. Berthier, inspector-general of Paris, offered a terrible example of the formidable re-action of the oppressed against their oppressors. M. Foulon was discovered, seized, conducted to Paris, and there hung upon the fatal lamp-iron. M. Berthier underwent the same fate: he had offered one thousand louis-d'ors to the man who discovered him at Compiègne; it was impossible for him, a vile slave of gold, to believe that a man without bread could refuse a bribe. The people, rendered ferocious by the excess of tyranny, exercised their fury on the bodies of these two victims. It is a deplorable crisis when the multitude, having no hope of obtaining justice, think themselves entitled to inflict it with their own hands,

At the same time, and after the example of Paris, all the citizens of this vast and populous country took up arms for their defence, and every
where

where formed themselves into bodies of civil militia. A general rumour was spread through the whole kingdom, with the rapidity of lightning, that the fugitive princes intended to attack France. It was added, that thousands of armed robbers were approaching; that they were at the distance of two, three, four, or five leagues; that there was not a moment to lose in adopting measures of defence; and that couriers (whom, however, nobody had seen) had arrived in haste with the intelligence. The most indolent were stimulated by this panic terror, and in less than a week three millions of men were enrolled for service; and every head was adorned with the tri-coloured cockade. A kind of order arose from the annihilation of all the regular powers, and these false alarms prevented a thousand real evils. The national guards contributed very effectually to the support of general tranquillity; and though great excesses were committed, they would otherwise have been much more numerous; the pillage would have been almost universal. Some persons have asserted, that these rumours were propagated by the advice of Mirabeau, whose genius, fertile in great expedients of action, adopted this as the surest mean of arming the whole nation. Others attribute its origin, though

on motives much less pure, to the faction of d'Orleans, which, as was evident from his profusion at the Palais Royal, already began to be formed.

These new national guards could not prevent every excess. In country places, the popular fury was wrecked on the feignorial lords. In several places the family mansions, the archives, and title-deeds, were burnt; and private animosity was often mixed with public vengeance. Whilst we blame these violent measures, which admit of no excuse, and which prove that the tyranny of the multitude is the worst of all tyrannies; we must, nevertheless, acknowledge, that those who for centuries had wrung and exasperated the people, deserve at least a portion of the censure.

“ Observe,” says Mirabeau, “ how many
“ causes had prepared the materials for this ex-
“ plosion. The refusals of justice, the mixture
“ of insult and oppression, the exile of popular
“ ministers, the appointment of men branded
“ with public odium to succeed them, the
“ violation of the sanctuary of the laws, the in-
“ dignities and menaces heaped upon the na-
“ tional

“ tional assembly, the arrival of foreign troops
“ and of artillery to besiege or invade the capi-
“ tal, all the preparations for a civil war—what
“ do I say? for a butchery of all who were
“ known or suspected to be friends of the peo-
“ ple, and who were to have fallen, surprised and
“ unarmed, under the sword of the soldiery;
“ and, to sum up all, two hundred years of op-
“ pression, public and private, political and
“ financial, feudal and judicial, crowned by the
“ most horrible conspiracy, which will ever ap-
“ pear upon the records of history; these are
“ the things which have provoked the people.
“ The people have, indeed, punished a few of
“ those whom the public voice proclaimed the
“ authors of their sufferings; but let any one
“ say whether, if our enemies had been successful,
“ greater torrents of blood would not have
“ flowed, either in the triumph or in the contest.
“ The people are often feared, on account of
“ the injuries which have been inflicted upon
“ them; they are bound in chains, because they
“ have been oppressed; and their persecutors
“ calumniate them, in order to stifle the re-
“ morse of their own consciences. Those men,
“ who set at nought every other tribunal, trem-
“ ble before the tribunal of the people; and
“ there

“ there exists too great a number of criminals
“ not to keep alive a vast portion of terror.
“ Had the scenes which have been acted at
“ Paris happened at Constantinople, the most
“ scrupulous of our politicians would have said,
“ the people did themselves justice ; the measure
“ of iniquity was full ; the punishment of one
“ vizier will become a lesson to others. The
“ event, far from appearing to us extraordinary,
“ would scarcely excite our attention. We
“ might easily make a volume, if we wished to
“ demonstrate by examples, that in these mo-
“ ments of rigour a government only reaps
“ the fruit of its own injustice. You treat
“ the people with contempt ; and yet you ex-
“ pect them to be always mild, always patient.
“ No : there is a lesson to be drawn from these
“ sad events. The injustice of the higher
“ classes towards the people makes them look
“ for justice in their own barbarity.”

We have cited these words of Mirabeau, as
an eternal lesson to governors ; we have resolved,
as a lesson to the people, to delineate in the fol-
lowing book some of those scenes of blood
which they themselves have exhibited. The
mere picture of those atrocities, which we could
wish to blot from the annals of history with our
tears,

tears, will teach nations themselves to restrain their impetuosity. After their crimes are committed, after the tempest of their passions is calmed, then they are torn with fruitless remorse. To prevent such sufferings is far more gratifying, is far more noble! Let it be remembered that those, who in their treatment of a criminal violate the sacred forms of justice, become still greater criminals themselves.

BOOK XI.

Horrible Event at Quincey.—Numerous Massacres.—Memorable Sitting of the 4th of August.—Abolition of Feudal Privileges.—Proposal of M. Necker to decree a Patriotic Contribution of a fourth Part of the Income of every Individual.

THE nobility of the court involved in their ruin, as they had involved in their party, the provincial nobility, as well as the class of the recently ennobled; although these three kinds of nobles had formerly entertained a most rooted contempt of each other. Other persons, who derived their incomes from the existence of political abuses, and who did not at first join this league,

league, soon entered into it. The kingdom, therefore, was divided into two parties, the court and the people : hence the synonymous terms of *aristocrat* and *royalist* on the one side, and of *patriot* and *democrat* on the other. The late events, joined to the struggle of opinions, and the rivalship of passions and interests, occasioned a terrible explosion in the kingdom, like those eruptions of Vesuvius which, by their fiery torrents, spread destruction far and wide. One atrocious crime, above all others, excited universal horror, and proved that the fanaticism of rank was not less barbarous than the fanaticism of religion.

M. de Mefmay, counsellor of the parliament of Besançon, and lord of Quincey near Vezoul, had invited the inhabitants of his neighbourhood to a feast, to celebrate, as he said, the union of the three orders. . He absented himself from the entertainment, under pretence that the parliament and nobility of the province would be displeased with him for showing such a respect to the decrees of the national assembly. The guests went, without any distrust, to this fatal entertainment : after the repast they were conducted into a garden, where the perfume of flowers added to the delights of the feast. On a sudden the earth
opened

opened under their feet, and the instantaneous explosion of a mine spread terror and destruction all around. At this horrible account the populace rushed to vengeance, with fire and sword in their hands, reduced several castles to ashes, and gave themselves up to the wildest excesses.

The denunciation of the horrid crime imputed to M. de Mesmay, made the national assembly shudder. In spite of the most minute detail of circumstances, in spite of the official memorial of a magistrate confirming the account, they could not believe the possibility of so abominable a crime; they considered the recital of such an event as a calumny against human nature. But they were obliged to yield to the force of evidence*, and they besought the king to demand the authors of this crime, by means of his ministers at foreign courts, so that they might be given up to the rigour of the laws. Two years afterwards, as the criminals could not be legally recognised, a decree of the legislative body suspended all the processes instituted against this lawyer, accused both by the voice of the public, and by every appearance of probability.

* Arrêt of the national assembly, July 25, 1789.

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The commotion propagated in the capital, and extending to the frontiers, by means of repeated actions and re-actions, by the banditti, and the agitators, by journals and incendiary writings, and by that faction of d'Orleans which we shall have occasion to develop in the course of this work, produced a continued series of disorders and calamities, which a long while retarded the labours of the assembly. It issued a proclamation calculated to calm men's minds; and received solemn vows of fidelity from all the corporate bodies. It made use of this authority to allay the troubles which had arisen in many places; but even this employment interrupted its progress. All these details occupied its time. It gave orders for the free circulation of provisions*, which had been stopped in many places by the malevolence of one party, and the ignorance of the other; but in the conflict of all the passions, of what avail are proclamations or even laws? Their suspension, or their impotence, is almost inevitable in the perilous passage from slavery to freedom. Men of bold and elevated souls, and of enlightened intellects, console themselves for these evils with the reflection that they are but temporary; but selfishness, or

* Arret of the national assembly, August 5, 1789.

an inability to behold in the future a more flattering prospect, caused a number of citizens, who justly felt for so many disasters, to conceive much less affection for the new order of things.

Terror was added to this catalogue of evils : vague rumours of conspiracies, innumerable recitals of falsehood, which are so greedily received in a time of calamity, were every day propagated ; and of these the most absurd, as is always the case, were most readily believed by the multitude. The husbandmen almost entirely abandoned the fertilizing plough, and thus added a strong probability of future dearth to the destructive scourge of the scarcity which actually existed. The fear of a want of corn is the surest means of rendering its dearth permanent. The miscreants had the audacity to cut down the wheat while it was green. They endeavoured to drive the people to the last excesses, that by means of licentiousness they might again be subjected to the degrading yoke of despotism. They even went so far as to conceal the grain, and to make a wilful waste of it ; and to add to the infamy of such a conduct, they afterwards cast the odium of their detestable artifices on the victims

victims whom they wished to destroy. The populace, stimulated to fury, raged like a tiger caught in the toils: meanwhile hired ruffians mixed with the crowd, and bathed themselves in blood, for the sole purpose of stigmatising the multitude with the infamy of their crimes, and of calumniating those whom they had previously misled. It was thus that the unhappy Sauvage was butchered in a riot at Saint Germain, by the hands of some unknown miscreants.

One of the greatest misfortunes of the people is, that they can never arrive at liberty without passing through the blood-stained path of anarchy. Switzerland alone has escaped this evil. The horrors which so long prevailed in France, and the long and tragical torrent of all kinds of crimes, undoubtedly form a very painful task to any one who writes the annals of our revolution. We shall abridge, as much as possible, those gloomy pages marked with the blood of the innocent; we shall have but too many scenes, even of a more afflicting nature, to describe under the decemvirate. The atrocities which we are about to delineate spread so universal a terror, that some members, even of the constituent body, thought their personal inviolability uncertain.

tain. The animated Cazalès, and the impetuous d'Eprémefnil, both fled: and the celebrated Maury, who had more than once been opposed to Mirabeau, though with the same disproportion as Æschines bore to Demosthenes, hastened rapidly toward the frontiers, but was arrested at Peronne, and forced to return to the national assembly. The Abbé Maury did not on this occasion shew the same courageous coolness and presence of mind which he afterwards displayed, when being one day surrounded by an enraged multitude, who threatened to hang him up on the fatal lamp-iron, he averted their fury by this happy reply: "Well, gentlemen, if you should hang me on this lamp-iron, do you think you will see the clearer?" His wit was applauded, and saved his life.

Let us return to the progress of those calamities, of those various excesses which sullied this period of the revolution. In the night of Saturday the 1st of August, there was a tumult at Saint Denys, under pretence of the dearness of bread. The mayor, M. Chatel, had undertaken the office of distributing the corn: he had for two days given notice that bread was scarce at Paris, and that the bread eaten there was of the kind which the bakers of Saint Denys were di-

rected to make. This bread, consisting of a mixture of barley, rye, and wheat, being badly baked, through the haste or negligence of the bakers, occasioned a general murmuring. The people, however, seemed disposed to be patient; but on that very evening several inhabitants of the place brought some bread of a very good quality from Paris, and asserted that there was great abundance in that city. In an instant an universal tumult was excited. A body of workmen hurried to the mayor's house, and obliged him to assess the price of bread at eight sous the loaf of four pounds weight. But the multitude, excited by those artizans of discord, those trumpeters of death, those men whose trade is assassination, rushed into the wildest excesses, and butchered, with an unheard-of refinement of barbarity, an unhappy man, who, during the preceding winter, had been the means of procuring an abundant provision for the poor.

At Caen, M. de Belzunce, on other pretences, underwent a familiar fate. At Strasburg one regiment was excited against another. Almost every where the people, trampled on by the pride of the nobles, tortured and harassed by the judicial despotism, goaded and subjugated by the fanaticism of the priests, crushed by the abuses of
privilege

privilege and feudalism, by the weight of financial oppression, and by the iron rod of ministerial tyranny, and paying with their sweat for the glittering and ostentatious luxury of the great, caused an impetuous reaction on their oppressors, and surpassed even their executioners in ferocity. M. de Montesson was shot at Mans, after having seen his father-in-law butchered before his eyes. In Languedoc, M. Barras was cut in pieces in the presence of his wife, who was just ready to lie-in. In Normandy, a paralytic old nobleman was thrown on a flaming pile of wood, from which his friends could not draw him until his hands were almost burnt off. In Franche-Comté, the Princess de Liffenay was compelled to disavow her titles, with the axe suspended over her head. We will not speak of Madame de Tonnerre, nor of M. Lallemand, nor of M. d'Ambli who was thrown naked upon a dung-hill; whilst the cannibals, who had torn out his hair and eyebrows by the roots, danced like savage beasts around him. Our pen refuses with disgust to trace a long detail of similar crimes, which differ only in the degree of their barbarity. These examples are, without doubt, more than enough to prove to the tyrannising orders, that their oppressions are only the seeds of those sufferings and calamities which their posterity will

assuredly reap. The same events will teach the people, that a contempt of the laws, and a neglect of the sacred feelings of humanity, will degrade them to a level with those nations of cannibals whose very existence seems to shock belief.

The national assembly was deeply afflicted with this state of anarchy; but it knew that the passage from evil to good is, in a vast empire, no less terrible than the evil itself; it did not therefore despair of the salvation of the country and of the re-establishment of the laws. Let us hasten to alleviate the impressions of grief and horror which the recital of so many crimes has excited; and let us follow the legislative labours of the assembly. They agitated the question of the famous declaration of the rights of man; but the disturbances in the provinces obliged them to suspend this discussion, and to issue a decree*, obliging all the citizens to return to order, not to separate the rights of man from his duties, to pay the legal taxes, and to reassume the sacred custom of submission to the law. M. de Noailles, on a sudden, demanded the attention of the assembly: he declared, that unless the cause of these popular disturbances were removed, the decrees passed against them would be illusory and useless; that this cause was to be found

* Sitting of the 3d of August 1789.

in the oppressive taxes which the people paid; that this burden must be lightened, and a decree passed for an equal distribution of the imposts; that feudal rights should be redeemable, and that all the personal services should be abolished without purchase. Another member of the nobility, M. d'Aiguillon, seconded this proposal. He observed, that before they gave to France a constitution, they ought to confer on her benefits of a more urgent nature, and such as the circumstances imperiously demanded. Then took place the memorable scene of the 4th of August. The assembly, which had been for several days wholly employed on the constitution, which had given itself up with ardour to the profound and serious discussions of natural right, and had treated on the most difficult and abstract, but at the same time the most interesting questions of metaphysics, now proceeded at once to the most decisive measures, and, on a sudden, changed the majestic gravity of the most weighty deliberations into an affecting scene of enthusiasm, an intoxication of public spirit, a contest of generous and patriotic sacrifices. This sitting was ill judged of by those who did not observe that it was necessary to prevent the most enormous evils, the evils of anarchy, and that the greater part of these sacrifices were either directed by the in-

structions of the different orders, or evidently requisite to serve as the bases of a new constitution. It was necessary to extirpate the last seeds of the feudal government, the last roots of that Gothic tree of feudalism, whose branches overshadowed the whole surface of the empire, and blasted its soil with barrenness. No less animating was it to behold the nobles and the clergy sacrificing the rights of hunting and fishing, of warrens and dove-houses; to see the parish ministers making a sacrifice of their perquisites, and the beneficiaries declaring that they would confine themselves to one benefice; the feignorial lords acknowledging the necessity of a redemption of the feudal rights; and the whole of the clergy giving up their tithes, and confiding to the honour and piety of the nation for the support of religion and its ministers. Above all, it afforded a grand and striking hope of the universal regeneration of the empire to behold the deputies of the *Pays d'Etat*, and of several privileged towns, advancing in succession, with a patriotic eagerness, to offer up the sacrifice of their ancient rights and charters, and to proclaim their wish that there should be no longer any provinces, but one sole nation, one sole family, one sole empire. The assembly prohibited the high price of judicial charges: it was not surprising that justice should be sold, in a state where

where the right of distributing it was purchased. The right of wardenship was also suppressed. Thus was in an instant levelled, a great part of the career which the courage of the assembly had opened to itself; a career which would have been terrible and arduous, but for the exertions of that night, in which a few hours did more for the happiness of mankind and the universal progress of reason, than could have been expected from the labours of a century. But at the view of that enormous mass of abuses which was at once destroyed, a very natural reflection presents itself to the mind: did the inventors of this monstrous, this incredible system, imagine themselves greater or less than man?

The burning of castles and of archives was continued in many parts of the country. Bands of robbers, taking advantage of the state of circumstances, spread themselves through several provinces, setting fire to property, without even distinguishing to what party the proprietors belonged. The national assembly ordered that severe prosecutions should be instituted against the miscreants. Meanwhile the decrees of the 4th of August were drawn up; and a proclamation was made of the solemn act by which the feudal government

vernment had been abolished. This proclamation consecrated so great an act of justice, so great a benefit conferred upon mankind, not by a simple law, but by an article of the constitution.

It seemed as if every day was to present some new obstacle to the progress of the revolution. Scarcely had the five first articles of the decree of the 4th of August been discussed, when M. Necker came to state to the assembly that the public receipt was unequal to its expenditure. Amongst other remedies he proposed to require of each citizen a patriotic contribution of the fourth part of his income. The assembly was struck with terror at the idea; but Mirabeau, with more than his usual eloquence, with an animation of gesture and countenance, and with a voice of thunder, prevailed on the assembly to decree with confidence the measure proposed by the minister: a measure which, presenting no grandeur of conception, no system of renovation, afforded a standard of his diminutive genius, and annihilated his pretensions to glory. The enemies of the public weal, observing the finances embarrassed, the executive power paralysed in all its parts, the tribunals without force, the magistrates without authority, and the whole empire a prey to the violence of the multitude,

itude, still nourished the parricidal hope of beholding the nation reduced to a total disorganization; but light suddenly beamed from the midst of darkness, order sprung from the womb of chaos. New bonds of subordination extended themselves from one extremity of the kingdom to the other: each city revived within its walls that municipal government which was esteemed so salutary, so desirable by our ancestors. Necessity, and the desire of a common defence, accelerated the establishment of this paternal administration, which, joined to the formation of the national militia, in a great measure subdued the anarchy, and inspired terror into the banditti and the counter-revolutionists. It is no less true than consoling to observe, that so complete a revolution in the existing manners, laws, and prejudices would probably, in a nation less civilized and less social, have caused greater torrents of blood to flow, and would have been sullied by a greater number of crimes; for those committed at a subsequent period by the decemvirs and their agents were directed against the majority of the nation, and are not to be laid to its charge. We ought not therefore to be astonished that such disorders followed the revolutionary crisis; but that those disorders were not infinitely

infinitely greater. After eight centuries of oppression, of languor, and of lethargy, the people awoke, and beheld themselves suddenly invested with sovereign power; they used it as a new weapon, which it is impossible to handle without danger; they drank out of the cup of liberty, which was to them as an intoxicating draught to a savage. They abused their power, but there is scarcely another nation which, in the career of victory, would have displayed so much moderation. Consider the conduct of the English when excited by Gordon against the Catholics, even in presence of a consolidated and vigorous government! Suppose them placed in the absence of all authority and all law, in the state of anarchy in which we were, and you would see them spill oceans of blood. Remember the barbarous wars which the English carried on in India! Remember, that in America they offered the savages a reward for every American scalp which they should bring in!

I know nothing so attractive, nothing so fruitful in instruction of every kind, as the history of those events which preceded and which followed the long and interesting struggle of the revolution, down to the very moment in which

which I write. Above all, the discussions to which it has given birth, and the great questions which it has resolved, demand our attention. In the following Book we shall present a sketch of those which occupied the constituent assembly immediately after the abolition of the feudal government.

BOOK XII.

Character of the French Nation, and of the philosophical and political Writers of that Period.—Declaration of the Rights of Man.—Reflections on that Subject.—Plans of Messrs. La Fayette, Syeyes, and Mounier.—Opening of the Discussions on the Constitution.—Of the Veto; and of the Question, whether the Assembly should be divided into two Chambers?—Elevation of the Bishop of Langres to the Presidency.

AFTER having destroyed every kind of servitude, the assembly, finding itself in a great measure freed from the ruins of feudalism, at length employed itself in laying the foundations of a free constitution, and in elevating the majestic edifice of liberty. It seems essential, in this place, to describe the spirit of the nation at the moment when

when the legislators were engaging in the most important discussion, at the moment when they were about to deliberate on the declaration of rights, on the royal function, on the *veto*, on the division of the legislative body, and finally, on the organization of the executive power. We have already shewn, in the beginning of this work, who those writers were that for a long time had influenced the nation, and had ripened it for the revolution : it remains to be observed, in order to give a just idea of the spirit which at that time prevailed, that to the great writers whom we have mentioned, there was unfortunately added a number of journalists, most of them calculated to mislead the public. A great writer is, without doubt, the first of men. A journalist, who is wise, enlightened, and zealously attached to social order, may make his journal a real code of public justice. He may, especially in a time of revolution, exercise the most honourable kind of magistracy, the magistracy of opinion ; he may become the established orator, the instructor, the moral officer, and the true regulator both of the people and of the government ; but he becomes a general evil, if he passes the limits of virtue, honour, and truth. Unfortunately there appeared at this period two hundred newspapers each day ; as many

many reports of the proceedings of the assembly, under a hundred different forms and titles; an equal number of pamphlets, critical, political, and æconomical. In this paper warfare, the visionary and the man of sober judgment did not contend with equal arms. It is easy to imagine, that the writer of exaggeration will much sooner gain followers than the timid and cautious reasoner. We must allow, that when the only question was, how to overturn those colossuses of gold which trampled on the people, when it was necessary to conquer the Bastille, it was then a proper moment to inflame the public enthusiasm, to elevate the public mind. But when the revolution, that is to say, the work of subversion and of destruction, was completed, the most judicious caution became a duty; but it was a duty which few of the democratical writers kept in view, less, perhaps, from criminal intentions than from a defect of judgment. It is but too true in politics, as in literature, that nothing is worse than a half-knowledge. Camille Desmoulins, Loustalot, and other writers of that cast, fell into convulsions on hearing mention made of a balance of powers, or a counterpoise of the constituted authorities; Montesquieu was, in their eyes, but a scholar in politics; the American constitution was too servile, that

that of England contemptible. The principal idea which directed them, and which also directed the leaders of the assembly, an idea which long contributed to augment our evils, was, that it was necessary to give to France a constitution absolutely new : M. Mounier himself has hinted at this idea in his *New Observations on the States General*. The aristocratical party, at that time, possessed some writers of eminence and information ; among these we may distinguish M. Mallet du Pan. But these writers, by decrying, with too much heat and animosity, all the proceedings of the assembly, and by incessantly lamenting the fate of the privileged classes, lost that influence which they would otherwise have possessed when they advanced the principles of good legislation and sound morality. Mirabeau, who was a long time the oracle of the violent party, in vain developed, at last, more moderate principles ; he was overborne by the torrent of democracy.

A great struggle arose in the bosom of the national assembly ; it first began to appear on discussing the declaration of rights ; but grew to still greater heights on the question relative to the part which the king should have in legislation. The assembly wished to begin with decreeing

ereing the declaration of rights as the first stone in the foundation of the political edifice. This, which was to comprehend only some eternal truths applicable to all forms of government, appeared, at first sight, to be a very simple operation, and susceptible of little opposition or uncertainty ; but it was quickly perceived, that nothing is more difficult, or, perhaps, more dangerous, than openly to proclaim these grand and abstract principles to the multitude, who are so ready to embrace every thing that seems to favour or excuse licentiousness, and to reject every thing which has a contrary tendency.

New plans for the declaration of rights were every day presented. The difficulties seemed continually to increase ; and the wisest men feared, with reason, as the event has since proved, that the declaration of the rights of man would rather become a declaration of war between the different classes of the social hierarchy. Amongst the numerous plans which were presented, the most distinguished were those of M. de la Fayette, of the Abbé Syeyes, and of M. Mounier. The first, in its clearness and simplicity, resembled the admirable declaration adopted in the American constitution ; perhaps

it

it was the best adapted to its object, as it rendered its truths more popular by presenting them in the light of a train of facts, and not a connected chain of consequences; but it seemed to require still further developement. M. Syeyes's plan, grasping, if we may so say, the first elements of human nature, and pursuing them with his accustomed powers of logic into all the social combinations, obtained the greatest number of suffrages: we must, however, observe, that it contained many of those half-truths, those principles which are more just in theory than applicable to the social state. M. Mounier came very near in principles to M. de la Fayette. M. de Mirabeau proposed, that after decreeing a second time that a declaration of rights should form the first chapter of our constitution, the assembly should postpone the definitive arrangement of it till after the other parts of the constitution should be entirely fixed, so that the whole might be presented to the people together. This proposition, which was received with the favour which it deserved by a part of the assembly, excited the murmurs and remonstrances of the violent. The reader is acquainted with the declaration of rights promulgated by the second constituent body: we shall see, that this also contains some

of those half-true, and consequently erroneous principles (for a thing can no more be half true than it can be half just) which we blamed in the plan of M. Syeyes. We will prove this assertion, by an examination of the first article, which is the most important in the declaration, and which declares, that *all men are born and continue equal in their rights*. It seems, that the liberty and equality of natural rights is here meant. There is no maxim, thus expressed, which is more false, or more destructive of all society. This may be most evidently demonstrated, by recurring to principles to which the assembly did not ascend. The assembly appears to have forgotten, that there are some principles which are the more certain to mislead, from having so great an appearance of truth. The undiscerning multitude behold in this proposition but one meaning, and that a flattering one to themselves; the metaphysical meaning is too elevated for them; it escapes their notice. The error of the assembly was the having advanced, as an axiom, a theorem which required the strictest demonstration; and in which, perhaps, had they proceeded with geometrical accuracy, they would have found only a problematical question, the result of whose analysis might be thus expressed: *All men, without distinction, have equal right to the justice and*

humanity of their fellow-men. It is evident, that the people could not have mistaken such a principle as this, which is clear, true, and capable of the strictest demonstration.

What does the populace, in any country, know of natural right? or what can they understand by it? Of what advantage would it be to them to understand this right, since they do not live in the state of nature, but in the social state, and can desire nothing but the amelioration of their lot in society? Will the populace imagine that the proposition asserted in the declaration of rights, even supposing it to be true, ceases to be applicable to men as soon as they enter into a political community? Will they not rather believe, that, as the perfect equality of men is acknowledged, it must follow, that property, which is inconsistent with that equality, must be abolished? And in fact, the poorest classes have, since this declaration, committed the most terrible excesses. It would have been proper, then, to have taken every precaution for restraining that licentiousness, instead of giving to it a fresh incentive. M. Malouet represented the inconveniences which were to be apprehended from giving to the laws the form of metaphysical reasoning. The Great Charter, and the Bill of Rights,

Rights, of the English nation, appeared in times when scholastic subtleties were mingled with all kinds of discussion; and yet their authors had the wisdom to exclude from them the first principles of natural law, as well as those of the abstract theory of universal political law. The Bill of Rights of the Americans approaches much nearer to that of England than to the Declaration of Rights established by the first constituent assembly of France.

We could have wished that they had published, at the same time, a declaration of the duties of a man and a citizen, nearly similar to that afterwards proposed by F. Lanthenas, deputy to the second national convention.

It was also established in the declaration which we are discussing, that *all the powers emanate from the nation essentially*; but to this axiom, true in itself, should have been added another truth of no less importance; that the nation cannot and ought not to exercise, by itself, any power, but only by means of the constituted authorities. This principle, that all the powers belong to the nation, has been repeated even to satiety. We have since beheld the decemvirs, or the convention, tyrannised over by them, establish as a principle,

principle, that a part of the people might lawfully rise in insurrection. It is true, that the decemvirs, in this, acted consistently with their plan of ruling by anarchy, the only means by which they could possibly render their oligarchy triumphant.

It must, however, be confessed, that notwithstanding the clouds which darken the sublime picture presented by the declaration of rights, to which we allude, we behold in it the guardian principles of society; and, in spite of the abuse which the people have made of some of its articles, it was, doubtless, a great step to proclaim the equality of rights, although badly defined, the liberty of the person, of conscience, and of the press, the inviolable right of property, and the imprescriptible sovereignty of nations. We shall see, in the conclusion of this work, how far the second convention, after the fall of the decemviral tyranny on the 9th of Thermidor (July 27th), avoided the defects of this first declaration of the rights of man.

The preliminaries being at length settled, the assembly entered upon the definition of powers, their reciprocal action, the organization of the legislative body, and the royal sanction. But the
opinions

opinions were divided as to the manner of undertaking this great work. Some wished to begin immediately by the creation or reform of the judicial bodies, the organization of the municipalities, the establishment of the elective assemblies, and of the provincial administrations, the government of the militia, and its relations to the legislative and executive authorities, the regulation of the naval and land forces, and the taxes destined to their support, the obedience which the soldiers owed to the monarch, and the fidelity which he owed to the nation; finally, the conversion of the existing taxes into new and less oppressive ones, and their proportion to the necessities of the state. Others desired that the principles of the French government should be first established: they thought, that by employing themselves on the judicial and administrative bodies, before they had laid down and fixed the ground-work of the constitution, they ran a risk of producing a monstrous government, and of erecting an edifice, without either uniformity or strength. Several were desirous of advancing boldly, and at once, to the grand question of the royal sanction, and the permanence of the legislative assemblies. Meanwhile suspicions of a vague nature were generally disseminated, which tended to alienate the minds of men from each

other, and added to the diversity of opinions terror and distrust.

The famous decrees of the night of the 4th of August shocked the avarice of the clergy and the pride of the nobility; the royal sanction presented them a resource. Before the union of the orders, the friends of the people, or those who assumed that title, were led by the identity of their sentiments to draw near each other in the hall of the assembly, and thus to mark out a line of demarcation between themselves and their opponents: they chose the left side of the hall. Those who frequented the right side, gave to the part of the hall occupied by the partizans of the popular cause, the name of the *Palais Royal Corner*: whilst the men on the left side called those on the right, *the Blacks*. As the deputies of the left possessed far the greatest popularity, the petitioners generally turned toward them, and affected great contempt for the right side: a circumstance which, it may well be conceived, only aggravated the hostility of both parties. Such was the disposition of their minds when the sittings on the constitution commenced. The opinions in favour of the sanction and right of refusal or *veto* had defenders the most illustrious in point of talent. Messrs. Mounier, Lally-Tolendal, d'Entraigues,

d'Entraigues, Liancourt, and Mirabeau, insisted on the integrity of the royal sanction, or the *absolute veto* of the monarch. "If the prince," said they, "is forced to sanction a bad law, there remains to the people only the terrible resource of insurrection; who shall hinder the representatives of the people from perpetuating their representation and overturning public liberty, as the long parliament formerly did in Great Britain?" Mirabeau extorted applause even from his opponents; but they combated him with equal force and energy. The two parties having agreed in rejecting the *suspensive veto*, every mode of accommodation seemed to be cut off; but the new ideas which arose in the course of the discussion inclined the majority to this middle path, which may be considered as a kind of compromise between republicanism and monarchy. The plan of the committee of constitution for a legislative body in two chambers, each having a negative in the proceedings of the other, a plan which was developed in M. Mounier's *Considerations on Governments*, divided the patriotic party; and the Bishop of Langres, who was, with reason, a warm defender of the system of two chambers, was elevated to the presidency.

Nothing was talked of in France, especially in Paris, but the *veto*. The frequenters of the Palais Royal, furious against the partizans of the *veto*, unjustly branded as aristocrats, threatened to march against them with force. The assembly despised these menaces, it even shewed great indulgence to the cities of Rennes and Dinan, from which it had received threatening addresses against the partizans of the *veto*. The bearers of these seditious addresses having offered to withdraw them, it was at last decided that the national assembly should be composed but of one chamber. This great error was fortunately avoided, in framing the constitution of 1795.

BOOK XIII.

Famine at Paris.—Monopoly practised by the Government.—Plan for carrying off the King to Metz.—Menacing Remonstrances on the Subject of the Royal Veto.—Observations made by the King on the Decrees of the 4th of August.—Character of Mirabeau.—Audacity of the Conspirators.

THE royal sanction was the only thing which remained to be decided. Notice was given of a letter

letter from the minister of the finances, informing the assembly that he had sent them a report which he had made to the king in council on this subject: and which he desired they would hear read. The partizans of the absolute *veto* opposed this request they had learnt from public report that M. Necker's opinion did not agree with their own. They maintained that the nation was interested in the royal sanction, and that the king himself was not entitled to renounce it; that it was proposed not to promote his interests, but those of public liberty. They contended also, generally, that it would be attended with great inconvenience for the assembly, at the moment of collecting their suffrages, to receive reports made to the king in council by his ministers. The majority decided that it should not be read at that time. Thus the Venetians receiving a letter from the Pope, which they feared was hostile to their wishes, laid it aside without reading. The publicity which, a few days afterward, was given to this memorial, procured it the applause of every good citizen. We may consider, as a noble monument of history, and as an honour to the brilliant epoch of the revolution, this essay in favour of public liberty, published by the first minister of a monarch until then deemed absolute. He said, with reason, that though the declaring the king's

king's sanction obligatory at the third legislature *, or the making it necessary at the second, might both be classed under the title of *suspensive veto*, there was the most striking dissimilarity in the ideas. An absolute *veto*, at the hazard of never using it, would be infinitely preferable to a suspensive *veto*, which also should not be used ; because the first would at least preserve all the dignity of the throne. He proposed that the royal sanction should not be rendered necessary until the third legislature.

On the motion of M. Guillotin, the inventor of the *guillotine*, to which invention he was prompted by humanity, the assembly, in order to direct its thorough investigation of the whole subject of the royal sanction, adopted the following series of questions: 1st, Can the king refuse his consent to the constitution? 2d, Can the king refuse his consent to the acts of the legislative body? 3d, In case the king refuses his consent, shall that refusal be suspensive or indefinite? 4th, In case the king's refusal shall be considered as suspensive, how long shall it last ; shall it be during

* Legislature is here used to express the individual legislative body, or rather the period during which the same members continue to sit, and which, by the first constitution of France, was two years.

one or more legislatures? On the first of these questions there could not arise the least doubt; every body agreed as to the principle: nevertheless the assembly judged it prudent to draw a religious veil over a truth in itself evident, but which it is perhaps dangerous to proclaim to the multitude. On the two following questions, they determined that the suspensive *veto* should be granted to the king. The solution of the fourth required two decisions: one on the duration of the powers held by the members of the legislative body, the other on the mode of renewing the deputies. On the first point, the term of two years was adopted: on the second, they preferred a total renewal of the legislative body to a partial renewal, at the same time leaving a power of re-electing those members who had merited the confidence of their constituents. After these preliminaries the question of the number of legislatures, to which the right of *veto*, given to the king, should be limited, did not seem very difficult. It was decided that the suspensive refusal of the king should cease after the second legislature; but it was resolved to avoid all discussion on this part of the royal prerogative, lest the king should employ it to annul the decrees of the 4th of August; this decision was therefore, for the moment, suspended,

Every

Every day the king's sanction to the decrees of the 4th of August was expected: this sanction had been demanded of him by a decree of the 12th of September; and he had appeared to approve them himself, when they were presented to him a month before by the president of the national assembly. It was not without extreme surprise that they received, on the 11th of September, instead of a pure and simple sanction, a letter from the king, containing critical observations on each article of the decrees. A forcible objection was made to this answer of the king's; and it was argued that these decrees had been presented to the king for promulgation, and not for assent. It was decided that the president should wait on the king, and request him to order the immediate promulgation of the decrees of the 4th of August and the following days: the monarch yielded to the desire of the representatives, and sent them the pure and simple sanction which they demanded.

Although the discussions, which we have here related, have become considerably less interesting since the abolition of royalty, we thought it our duty not to omit the consideration of questions so instructive. We have seen that the absolute veto had been refused to the king: nevertheless the elder Mirabeau freely avowed that he would

would rather live at Constantinople than in France, if the laws were to be made without the consent of the king. He was right in this assertion; especially as the division of the legislature into two chambers was obstinately resisted.

This orator has acted too conspicuous a part in the history of the revolution not to merit here a particular consideration. M. de Mirabeau was one of those rare mortals who are born to give an impulse to their own age and to future generations, if events concur in throwing them into adequate situations. The revolution was necessary to make him appear what he really was. But for the public councils of the revolution he would have been known only by works of a temporary interest; he would not have displayed his greatest talent, that of haranguing, without premeditation, at the tribune, and of governing a great assembly by the magnitude of his genius and eloquence.

The talent of unpremeditated oratory is, as is well known, peculiarly important in debate. A striking mode of gesture, a full and sonorous voice, a soul of fire, an unshaken self-command, an immoderate desire, not of
true

true glory, but of being, at all hazards, the leading character; a profound degree of knowledge, an impetuous and truly volcanic eloquence; finally, a knowledge of mankind, and the art of managing the feelings of a great assembly; all concurred to enable him to affect, to command, to subjugate every mind, and to exhibit all the powers of eloquence. It was thus that he excited all the tempests of opinion, that he seized on every imagination, that he gave the most powerful impulse to the revolutionary movement; and excited or quelled, at his pleasure, the most violent commotions. To him may, with the greatest justice, be applied, what *Æschines* said of *Demosthenes*: "What would you have thought, had you heard him speak himself?" To such an height was the enthusiasm of admiration for *Mirabeau's* talents carried, that at the very time when the partizans of the absolute *veto* were held in detestation by the people, *Mirabeau*, who obstinately maintained that opinion, continued nevertheless to be their idol. He even said himself, that it would be no easy matter to rob him of his popularity. He had, like almost all great men, very strong passions. He readily confessed all the extravagancies, all the immorality, all the dissoluteness of

of his private life. He had pursued a stormy career even under a tranquil government; and he seemed to be in his proper element, when he was transported into the midst of political tempests. He did not live long enough to enable any one to pronounce, with confidence, whether he had any secret plan, or what that plan was. Every thing, however, seems to render it probable, that he meant to favour the views of d'Orleans, in order to become his prime minister. Mirabeau lived too long for his glory: We have seen in him a man ready to sell himself to all parties, and to manage them all as his own ambitious views directed. We will return to this sketch of his character, when we reach the epoch at which he terminated his career. We shall see that he was never a true statesman; and that he had still less claim to the title of a virtuous citizen. His immorality and ambitious views, which were limited to projects of a secondary class, such as that of being prime minister, prevented him from immortalizing himself in a more glorious manner, by giving to France a constitution nearly similar to that of America, or to that which we ourselves adopted in 1795. By acting thus, he would have shewn himself a truly great man; instead of which, he became

became only a rhetorical intriguer, a man of selfish vanity, and of ordinary ambition. Mirabeau did not even possess that powerful kind of oratory which can endure the severe test of a critical perusal, to so great a degree as Cicero or Demosthenes. He was never able to compose those sublime orations which are the delight and admiration of ages, which demanded the most polished expression, the most extensive conception, the most brilliant imagination, the most systematic arrangement. The real superiority of his talents only appeared in his unstudied harangues from the tribune. His mind, glowing with animation and impetuosity, easily became inflamed and electric, amidst the stormy contests of the assembly, more suited to his disposition than the silence of the closet. This is, doubtless, the circumstance which rendered him more admirable in declamation than in composition. We know but one speech, of any length, in which Mirabeau comes near the manner of Demosthenes; a speech so much the more astonishing, as it was entirely unpremeditated, and because the orator, rendered still more vehement by an obstacle which he did not expect to meet, delivered it, upon finding that a plan of a decree which he had drawn up, and which re-

lated to the patriotic contribution of a fourth of every income, proposed by M. Necker, had been in his absence, rejected. This was one of the greatest triumphs, one of the noblest moments of French eloquence : it was followed by universal acclamations and shouts of applause. One single deputy requested to answer him ; but he remained, with outstretched arms, motionless and silent, as if struck with terror and affright at having undertaken to answer this Milo of the tribune. We must, however, declare, that Mirabeau's written eloquence was in general very inferior to the thunder of his tongue. Only remark, how destitute of fire and interest he appears in his *Letters* to Sophie Ruffey, whom he, nevertheless, loved with the most passionate idolatry ! How inferior are those Letters to the gloomy pages of Rousseau's *Heloise* ? or even to the *Eloisa* of Pope ? And, to return to Mirabeau's discourses, there was in the constituent assembly a man much his superior in the eloquence of the pen, M. de Lally Tollendal.

As soon as the assembly had decreed the constitutional articles on the succession to the throne, and postponed to future discussion, or future contest, the useless question of the renunciation of

the Bourbon branch actually reigning in Spain, they presented to the king the constitutional articles, which required only a simple acceptance, and needed no sanction. They presented to him, at the same time, the declaration of rights; and this was the point where an attempt was made to stop the progress of the national assembly, and prevent it from raising any higher the edifice of the constitution. The liberty of the press, which the assembly had virtually established, was turned against them; and there appeared, during the session, a deluge of pamphlets, which they had the good sense to despise, and even to permit them to be sold at their doors, and to be distributed within their walls.

For a long time the despotism of the court and the avarice of monied men had conspired together to starve the people, and to levy a tax from their toil and misery. To the insatiable pride and tyranny of the ministers were added infamous speculations on corn. Louis XV. himself took part in this monopoly. On the 12th of July 1767, M. de l'Averdi sold France for twelve years, into the hands of a company of monopolists. The parliaments of Rouen and Grenoble alone dared to put in force the laws
against

against this villanous traffic ; but their efforts were in vain ; the complaints and the sufferers were alike buried in the gloomy abyſſes of the Baſtille. The contract of l'Averdi, which may be called a real compact of famine, would have been renewed in 1789, if the revolution had not delivered France from this hoſt of blood-fuckers. But during the courſe of the revolution, and eſpecially in its early periods, the ſcheme of ſubduing the people by famine was more than ever attempted. Letters were forged with the ſignature of M. Necker, forbidding the dealers to bring their corn to the markets. “ I truſt
“ my cauſe,” ſaid M. Necker, “ to the de-
“ cision of truth, which would be to me as the
“ hairs of Samſon, if I wiſhed to make uſe of
“ it.” We ſhould recommend him and all
good citizens to make this uſe. Without doubt, it is gratifying to an elevated mind to answer, like Scipio, to its calumniators, “ Let us go to the
“ Capitol ; this is the day on which I conquered
“ Carthage.” But there is ſtill more greatneſs in replying, like Cato, ſeventy times to our accuſers.

What have not the enemies of the revolution attempted ? Have they not dressed hired rob-

bers in the uniform of the French and Swiss guards? Have they not, by dispersing every where false edicts of the king, and false decrees of the national assembly, occasioned innumerable atrocities, innumerable violations of persons and property, particularly in the countries of Maçon and Dauphiné? This infernal system of tactics has been always familiar to them.

For above a month the rumours of an approaching insurrection, and a counter-revolution, were circulated in a vague manner: as the time drew near for the assembly to present the constitutional articles for the king's acceptance, these rumours began to take a greater appearance of consistency. The terrors of a civil war, and of a general convulsion, were added to the miseries of famine: the period of its breaking out was even said to be fixed for the month of October; and the English papers went so far as to name the 7th as the day appointed. It was suspected that secret assemblies were held. The malcontents declaimed openly, and with rage, against the decrees of the 4th of August. They must have thought themselves very sure of success, since they dared to utter their menaces even in the midst of the assembly. A deputy of the nobility apostrophized the popular

pular party, by calling them, not without some reason, "a set of demagogues, who would soon be reduced to return to their duty." And as the Palais Royal was an object of jealousy, it was observed that, under pretext of keeping order, the patroles continually dispersed the knots and groups which were formed in the garden. The French people, like the Athenians, always mix, even in their greatest calamities, ridicule and pleasantry with sorrow and seriousness: a print was exhibited on this occasion, at the bottom of which was written, *Patriotism driven from the Palais Royal by patrolism*. The fawning slaves of court favour, those reptiles who formerly elevated themselves to honours by meanness, and to dignities by infamy, employed all the united means of power and credit, and engaged in the most secret artifices to realize the phantom of famine. The agents of d'Orleans seconded them, but with other views. In this part of their plan, however, they succeeded. Paris was reduced to a want of bread. The new conspiracy formed against liberty sharpened, in the dark, its daggers. What do I say? It even disdained to disguise itself. A subscription was opened, with very little concealment, for the purpose of murdering the good citizens. It was determined once more to invest the capital with

an armed force. The city of Metz was chosen as the centre of the operations: it was thither that the king was to retire to kindle the flames of civil war: and already a confused rumour seemed to presage a new convulsion, as the whistling of the winds, and the low and fullen muttering of the thunder in the bosom of the distant clouds, foretel the swelling of the boisterous waves, and threaten the sailor with the approach of danger and of death.

BOOK XIV.

Arrival of the Regiment of Flanders at Versailles.

—Arrogance of the Conspirators.—Orgy of the 1st of October.—Indignation of the Parisians, —Days of the 5th and 6th of October.

THE conspirators at first attempted to weaken or to divide the Parisian army; but in this they could not succeed. M. d'Estaing, commander of the national guard of Versailles, was a courtier by habit and by ambition; and, like most of our own military officers, a royalist by prejudice. On the 18th of September, he repaired to the military committee, and after causing all but the staff-officers to go out, he made those who remained

mained take an oath never to reveal the secrets with which he was about to entrust them. Then he painted to them the alarm of the king, and the danger which the insurrection of Paris (that was his expression) had brought upon the royal family. They unanimously answered, that force must be repelled by force: and they resolved to demand of the king a supply of a hundred thousand men. The court had already given orders for the arrival of the regiment of Flanders. The national guard of Versailles participated neither in the opinions nor in the complaisance of the staff-officers *. M. d'Estaing, nevertheless, took all the necessary measures for the arrival of the regiment. M. de Mirabeau had already denounced a part of these proceedings to the assembly; but in vain. The security of the legislative body redoubled the audacity of the conspirators. The regiment of Flanders at length entered Versailles, bringing with them two pieces of artillery. The *aristocrats* at this moment were audacious enough to boast of their approaching triumph: several of them carried their insolence so far as to appear in the public places at Paris, and even at the re-

* M. d'Estaing has since lost his head on the scaffold, in the time of Robespierre.

views of the Parisian guards, with a black cockade, doubtless as a sign of the mourning which they were preparing for all France. The departure of the king, and the dissolution of the national assembly, were openly talked of; they were even regarded as certain in those societies which were so improperly called *good company*, that is, among the royalist or aristocratic party, who have since styled themselves men of honour, men of respectability, as synonymous with their former term, good company. They particularly reckoned on the attachment of the body guards who were about the king's person; and it must be owned that many of them were actually engaged in this fatal plot; but there were also amongst them men entirely blameless in this respect, and whose sentiments were decidedly patriotic: unfortunately these were, however, by far the minority. The body guards had not yet put on the national cockade, and they were the only corps in the whole army who had not taken the civic oath: at length the fatal entertainment of the 1st of October devoted them to the execration and vengeance of the multitude.

The court thought that they should gain the regiment of Flanders by their caresses. The body guards,

guards, on their part, invited them to an entertainment, the first that they had ever given as a corps, at Versailles. Several officers of the national guard were also invited by name, as well as some chasseurs, with whom these favourites of the throne had never before associated, and whom they scarcely used to notice with a simple salute. The theatre in the king's palace, which had never before been used but for the festivals given to the court, was fixed upon to serve as a hall for the banquet. It was on Thursday the 1st of October. The music of the body guards and of the regiment of Flanders served to enliven and set off this disastrous festival. During the second course four toasts were given—The king, the queen, the dauphin, and the royal family. That of the nation was expressly refused by the body guards, according to the testimony of a great number of witnesses. The king having returned from hunting, the queen begged to accompany him, and they were led, together with the heir apparent, or, rather, they hastened voluntarily to the hall of the banquet. Every thing had been planned beforehand. The court arrived : the queen advanced, holding the dauphin by the hand. This visit, unexpected by most present, excited shouts of animation and delight. The queen then took the

royal infant in her arms, and carried him quite round the table, amidst a thunder of acclamations and applause. Immediately the feast became a real orgy. The court retired. The wine, which was lavished in astonishing profusion, inflamed all the guests. The music played several airs calculated to augment the enthusiasm; such as *the March in Iphigenie*, and *O Richard! O mon Roi! l'univers t'abandonne*; the perfidious allusion of which could not at that moment be misunderstood. A charge was founded. The guests stagger toward the boxes, which they scaled, exhibiting a spectacle at once horrible and disgusting; the national cockade was proscribed. M. de Perceval, aid-de-camp to M. d'Estaing, mounted the balcony of the apartment of Louis XVI. and seized a white cockade, amidst the applauses of a number of spectators, who soon followed his example. Intoxication and folly produced a thousand other extravagancies, and the alarm was communicated to the city. The banquet was repeated the next day in the Riding-School, with a greater concourse of guests, and with circumstances still more offensive and insulting to the nation.

A detachment of the national guards having waited on the queen to thank her for some colours

lours which she had lately presented them, she used these imprudent words in reply, "I was charmed with what passed on Thursday." They even went so far as to distribute white cockades in the gallery of the castle.

The news of what had passed at Versailles did not reach Paris till two days afterward; a very remarkable circumstance, considering the short distance, and the great intercourse between Paris and Versailles. The effect which it produced is more easily to be imagined than described. The cry of vengeance resounded through the streets: and the general irritation was augmented by a most terrible scarcity. Troops of women poured like a torrent through the streets, crying, *Bread! Bread!* A baker had nearly become their victim, and been hung up at the fatal lamp-post, but for the efforts of several good citizens, particularly of M. de Gouvion. These raging Bacchantes would even have burnt the Hotel de Ville, and have committed the most horrible excesses, if Maillard *, whom they at length took as their leader, had not proposed, in order to save the Hotel de Ville and the capital, to lead

* The name of Maillard is auspicious to the state: in the reign of Charles VI. a citizen of that name saved Paris.

his tumultuous assemblage, which was now joined by a number of men, toward Versailles. "Whilst they are marching four leagues," said he to himself, "measures may be taken to guard against the impending danger." He did more: he prevailed on all these women to lay aside their arms, by persuading them that they would affect the national assembly much more by asking for bread as suppliants, than by assuming a threatening manner. They at length set out, accompanied by a body of armed men, and followed by a company of volunteers of the Bastille. For several hours the sounding of the *tocsin*, and the beating of the *generale*, had put the whole city in motion. A deputation of the citizens presented themselves to M. de la Fayette, crying out, "We must go in search of the king, and bring him to Paris: we must exterminate the regiment of Flanders, and the body guards." In vain did M. de la Fayette endeavour to restrain them. He received at the same instant a letter from the municipality, enjoining him to march with the Parisian army to Versailles. The general turned pale, and surveying, with a mournful look, the numerous battalions which surrounded him, gave the order to march. It must always be remembered that the Orleanist faction contributed greatly to set in motion the public mind,

both

both by the journalists whom they paid, and by their liberality, or rather profusion, at the Palais Royal.

The national assembly, whose apathy, with regard to all that was passing at Versailles, was to the highest degree astonishing, continued its deliberations in tranquillity. The nomination of M. Mounier as president, irritated the people, who looked on him as a traitor, because he had voted for the royal sanction, and because they did not know his system of a division of the legislative body into two chambers. M. Mounier was, however, one of the principal authors of the revolution, and one of the chief leaders of the patriotic party. He was a man of integrity and of real information; but the populace will always be the populace, and will always be incapable of discerning its true friends.

The day on which information arrived of the insurrection at Paris, the king's acceptance of the declaration of rights, and of the chief constitutional articles, was expected. The king in his answer gave the assembly to understand, that he only agreed to the constitutional articles on account of circumstances, and that he reserved to himself the examination of the declaration
of

of the rights of a man and a citizen. The assembly was very much dissatisfied at this answer, and several members in the course of the debate alluded to the military orgies which had lately disgraced Versailles. It was decreed that the president at the head of a deputation should wait on the king, and beg him to grant a pure and simple acceptance of the declaration of rights; and of the nineteen first articles of the constitution. During the course of the discussion, it was observable that the members frequently went out and came in, and the assembly was in extreme agitation: every thing seemed to indicate an approaching and violent convulsion. M. de Mirabeau, informed of what was going on, and perhaps engaged with d'Orleans as one of the secret movers of the proceedings*, approached the president M. Mounier, and said to him in a low voice, "Mounier, Paris is marching against us: go and give this information at the castle. Say, if you will, that you received it from me; you have my permission: but by all means put an end to this scandalous contest. The time is pressing, and there is not a moment to be lost."

* By what other means could Mirabeau, between eleven and twelve o'clock, know of the march of the Parisian guards? And how did it happen that no other person knew this circumstance?

The

The event soon justified Mirabeau's assertion: about three o'clock several thousands of women were seen advancing on the road from Paris, with Maillard at their head. They stopped all the couriers who wished to pass them, and forced them to keep back. The *generale* was beat, however, at Versailles, as soon as they appeared in sight. The body guards, to the number of three hundred and twenty, mounted their horses, and formed themselves into a squadron on the parade, with their backs turned to the iron gate of the castle. Already the regiment of Flanders and the dragoons had run to arms, when Maillard appeared at the bar of the assembly. "We are come," said he, "to ask for bread, " and to demand the punishment of the body " guards who insulted the patriotic cockade." At that instant a national cockade was brought to him from the body guards, and he shewed it to the women as a pledge of their pacific dispositions: all the women immediately shouted, "Long live the king, and the body guards!" The president hastened to seek the king, and to present to him a picture of the famine which afflicted Paris; and the Bishop of Langres took the chair of presidency.

A knot of women, however, while Maillard was still at the bar of the assembly, advanced toward

toward the castle to ask for bread; but the body guards prepared to bar their approach. M. de Savonnieres, a lieutenant, with two other officers of the guards, pursued, sword in hand, M. Brunont, a foldier of the Parisian guard, whom the women had compelled to be their leader. This unfortunate man had nearly fallen, when a musquet shot, fired by a citizen-soldier of Versailles, broke Savonnieres' arm, and saved the life of Brunont. This first act of hostility inflamed the resentment of both parties, and animated the people against the body guards. The combat soon began; reproaches were succeeded by the whistling of bullets, and some carbines having been imprudently discharged by the king's guards, (for they were ordered not to fire,) struck two or three of these Amazons. Their fire was immediately returned; and two or three of the guards were dismounted. Three pieces of cannon loaded with grape shot, which had been brought by the Fauxbourg Saint Antoine, were at the same instant pointed: the match was applied to them several times without success, on account of the rain, and some voices were heard exclaiming, "Stop! it is not yet time."

Thus the rain, and the want of union among their assailants, preserved the body guards. The
women

women of Paris then detached themselves from the main body of the combatants, and attacked the regiment of Flanders in front, and the dragoons in flank. They broke their ranks, and seizing the men in their arms, made their weapons fall from their hands. The order not to fire, nor to irritate the people, having been a second time repeated to the body guards, they retired, and shut the iron-gates of the castle. Apprehending an attack, and wishing to know whether the passage remained free, the king's carriages attempted to go out by the gate of the orangery. The detachment of the guards of Versailles, which occupied this post, refused to let them pass. The night arrived, and the regiment of Flanders gave the people repeated assurances of peace and fraternity; and even admitted them to walk freely among their ranks. A general reconciliation seemed at hand, owing to the efforts of M. Lecointre to moderate both parties. The body guards received orders to quit the parade, and to withdraw entirely. In order to do this, they passed along the terrace in the way to their quarters. The last detachment had their swords drawn, and made use of them upon some miserable wretches, who could not be distinguished on account of

the darkness. This detachment fired several pistol shots, which were answered by some musquets. The last squadron, and the last but one, made a movement to the right, in very bad order, they at the same time fired a volley, which was returned, but with little force.

At this moment the destruction of the aggressors seemed inevitable. The people were boiling with indignation. A group of women and Parisian pikemen disputed for the possession of one of the body guards, whose head they wished to cut off. He was a M. de Moucheton, of the Scotch brigade. M. de Baleine threw himself before him, and supplicated the people to suspend the fatal blow : he at length prevailed on the executioners to enter one of the barracks, as if to hold a council of war ; and in the meanwhile M. de Moucheton escaped.

The news of the approach of the Parisian army caused a kind of diversion to the other scenes of the day. The regiment of Flanders were again called to arms ; but received orders to abstain from any act of hostility. The dragoons were mixed and confounded with the people. About ten o'clock, M. Mounier arrived on the spot, and read to the people, and to all

the women collected together, by beat of drum, the pure and simple acceptance which the king had given to different articles of the constitution.

The court, which was already informed of the arrival of the Parisian army, made a new attempt to leave the castle. The queen was in one of the carriages, but the officer on guard refused to let them pass. Add to this circumstance, that the chasseurs of Lorraine, in garrison at Rambouillet, had for several days received orders to keep themselves in readiness for marching, and *that they passed that night under arms*. It will be difficult not to conclude, that the king had for some time formed the plan of escaping. The queen, being unable to fly, and fully convinced that the rage of the Parisians was directed only against herself, declared that she would rather die at the feet of the king, than be separated from him. Before the arrival of M. de la Fayette, the king had sent to desire that M. Mounier would come to the castle with as many deputies as he could collect. Mounier, with several of his colleagues, obeyed the invitation of the monarch, who protested, in their presence, that he had never an intention of departing.

BOOK XV.

*End of the Days of the 5th and 6th of October.—
The King fixes his Residence at Paris.—Reflections on the Conspiracies of those two Days, and on the two first Insurrections which took place in the French Revolution, that of the 14th of July, and that of the 6th of October.*

THE Parisian troops, fatigued with such a march in bad weather, sought only lodging and repose: they found both the one and the other; and a tranquil night succeeded this tumultuous day. M. de la Fayette thought that he might now take a little rest; but a horrible train of disasters soon drew him from his fatal, and we must say, astonishing and criminal security. Those legions of women who had left Paris the preceding evening, passed the night in the hall of the assembly, and in the great guard-room on the Parade. An hired banditti, mixing themselves with the citizens, contributed to inflame them: until all, intoxicated with rage, and thirsting after vengeance and blood, rushed out together about five o'clock, when the day began to dawn. This vast assemblage advanced towards the castle. In the general confusion of the preceding

ceding evening the most ordinary precautions for security had been neglected. The frantic horde penetrated into the court of the Palace. The body guards flew to arms. A musquet shot, fired from a window in the castle, either through imprudence, or more probably from a blind zeal, killed a citizen on the spot. This sight aroused the vengeance of the multitude; they rushed onward, uttering the most terrible menaces, particularly against the queen. Already had they ascended the great staircase, when they were met by the body guards. M. Miomandre Sainte Marie having descended four steps, they immediately fell upon him, but he fortunately disengaged himself, and rejoined his party. The guards retreated, part into the king's hall, and part into the great hall. The banditti turned toward the queen's hall, and attacked those who were keeping guard there. M. Tardivet du Repaire ran toward the queen's apartment, in order to prevent these wretches from penetrating thither. He was assaulted, and fell under the blows which were directed against him from all sides. A man, armed with a pike, attempted to pierce his heart; but M. de Repaire disarmed him, and raised himself from the ground. With this pike he parried the thrusts of a bayonet, directed against him by a soldier, until at length

the door of the king's hall was half-opened, and he was enabled, by the assistance of two of his comrades, to enter. During this time M. Miomandre Sainte Marie saw one of the centinels of the queen's hall dragged down the staircase : fearing only for the danger of that princess, he darted through the midst of the furious multitude ; he beheld M. de Repaire almost overwhelmed by his assassins ; he heard a band of cannibals howling out cries of death : nothing stopped him ; he reached the queen's apartment, and opening the door, cried to a lady, whom he saw in a distant part of the chamber, " Madam, save the queen ; her life is demanded : " I am here alone against two thousand tygers." He shut the door upon himself ; and after defending it in a combat of several minutes, he was stretched on the ground by a pike ; at the same moment another assailant gave him a blow on the head with the but-end of a musket ; and he lay senseless and bathed in blood. The assassins, thinking him dead, plundered him, and returned to the great hall, where they furnished themselves with arms. M. Miomandre recovering his senses, and seeing that there were only four persons at the door, collected all his strength, and fortunately escaped from his murderers. M. de la Roque Saint Vivieu, who stood
centinel

centinel in the queen's hall, convinced that there was not a moment to lose, had hastened with five or six of his comrades into the first of the queen's apartments, from whence they reached her anti-chamber, and were admitted, for an instant, into her chamber, which they immediately left, that she might dress herself. The queen hastily put on her petticoat and stockings, and throwing a cloak over her shoulders, ran to the king by a secret passage called *the King's passage*. Whilst she was passing through that part of the palace called the *oil de bœuf**, she heard the threatening outcries of "She is a Messalina, she must be hanged; we will eat her liver." At that instant the discharge of a pistol and of a musquet increased her fright. She at length arrived, and bursting into tears, cried, "My friends! my dear friends, save me and my children!" She found there the dauphin, who had been brought by Madame de Tourzel. The king was gone out. Awakening suddenly at the moment the castle was attacked, he had dressed himself in haste, and went to the queen's apartment by one door, just as she had quitted it, to seek him, by the other. Being informed of this circumstance by the guards, who still remained there, he returned to his own

* An hall of an oval form.

apartment; and after going with the queen to meet the princess Elizabeth, they both prepared to present themselves to the people. Justice obliges us to say, that Louis XVI. on this occasion displayed considerable firmness: Nero, in a conjuncture nearly similar, thought no place safe enough to hide himself in. The body guards, by their heroic courage, made amends, if any thing could make amends, for the crime of the two orgies. In the *ail de bœuf*, all those who could reach that part of the castle assembled; and entrenched themselves with benches, chairs, and other articles of furniture, piled together against the door. But presently a horrible noise is heard: the banditti batter the door with repeated blows; a pannel is broken, and the guards look for nothing but death. On a sudden a profound calm succeeds the uproar; the apartments were filled by the Parisian national guard. At the first information of the disastrous events which were passing at the castle, the Parisian army had hastened thither. The grenadiers entered the apartments, and in a moment drove out the banditti. But a great number of the body guards had fallen into their hands. Messrs. Deshuttes and Varicourt, surprised at the beginning of the attack, had been massacred, and their bleeding heads carried each on the point of a pike

pike from Versailles to the Palais Royal at Paris. Bands of frantic wretches dragged here and there the unhappy victims whom they had devoted to death. Some were for hanging them up at the lamp-post ; others called for an assassin of their troop, surnamed *le Coupe-tête* *. Such was the hideous appellation given to this man, or rather this monster, remarkable for his long beard, and for two white patches which he wore on his breast. With his arms naked to the elbow, his hands stained with the blood of the first executions, and brandishing a hatchet furiously in the air, he seemed to provoke new murders, and to call for new victims.

M. de la Fayette made the greatest exertions to save the body guards. The Parisian soldiers placed them under their standards, as under a sacredegis. Scenes of affection prepared every heart for peace. The body guards, who had retired into the inner apartments of the castle, re-appeared at the windows, took off their hats, put in the national cockade, and shewed it to the people, crying *Vive la nation!* The people answered by a shout of *Vive le Roi! Vive les gardes-du-corps!* All the clouds of discord were dissipated : the two bodies of soldiery formed

* The head-chopper.

but

but a single corps: and all parties were mixed and confounded in mutual embraces. The king appeared in the balcony, accompanied by the queen and her children. A voice cried, *The king to Paris*; and in an instant the people and the army unanimously shouted *The king to Paris*. M. la Fayette soon announced the monarch's intention of yielding to the wish of the capital. The national assembly decreed, that the king and the constituent body should be inseparable during the continuance of the session; and at the same time named a deputation of 100 members to accompany the king to Paris. A large detachment of the army, with a train of artillery, and a great party of women and of men, armed with pikes, opened the procession: the generality were on foot, others in hired carriages, some in carts, and others on the artillery. They were followed by fifty or sixty waggons of corn and flour. A numerous body of the city cavalry, mixed with deputies, women, and grenadiers, surrounded the king's carriage, which proceeded as slowly as possible, in order to accommodate its pace to that of the multitude. After these came, in confusion, and without any distinction, the regiment of Flanders, the dragoons, the body guards, the banditti, the prostitutes, and the hundred Swiss guards. The whole

whole escort filled the air with songs and acclamations: they were surrounded through the whole of their march by an innumerable crowd of spectators. The women who preceded the king's carriage sang allegorical airs, containing simple, but striking allusions to the king and queen. "We shall no longer want bread," said they; "we are bringing along with us the baker and his wife." The armed force terminated this procession, at once striking, grotesque, and hideous. I say hideous; for it must not be forgotten, that the *Head-chopper*, the man with the long beard, dressed in a high cap, and bearing on his shoulder a bloody axe, marched at the head of the whole escort. His hair, his clothes, and his hands all dropped with blood, and he had smeared with blood his countenance. He walked between two men, who bore on pikes, one the head of Deshottes, the other that of Varicourt. The whole exhibited a fourfold spectacle, that of a massacre, a civic festival, a licentious assemblage, and a military triumph. The monarch might have been equally taken for a father in the midst of his children, a victim surrounded by his assassins, or a dethroned prince led captive in the triumph of his rebellious subjects. What is, perhaps, more astonishing, is that

that La Fayette should not have sufficient authority to prevent the horrible sight of the two bleeding heads carried upon pikes before the carriage, especially at a moment when the people, restored to their former sensibility and love for their king, would certainly not have refused to remove from his eyes so terrible and disgusting an object. And yet there are persons, even at present, who call this very man the most affectionate and faithful friend of Louis XVI! Is not this a disgusting instance either of derision or of cruelty?

The mind harassed, agitated, and overwhelmed by this rapid succession of tragical events, of pictures alternately terrible and majestic, has need to return back into itself, and to render itself, as it were, an account of its own impressions. Whatever touches of the pencil we may add, we shall never give more than a faint idea of those scenes of terror and of blood, or of the affecting spectacle by which they were succeeded. The recital which we have made has shown the criminal conspiracies of the court, and of those plots it cannot be doubted that the queen was the foul. But at the same time, the impartiality of history forces us to recognise the daughter of Maria Theresa in that courageous spirit

spirit and heroic firmness which the queen exhibited in the moment of suffering and of danger.

If the body guards showed marks of rebellion against the national will ; they at the same time displayed a most brilliant conduct in devoting themselves so heroically for the king and queen, whose lives were entrusted to their care. I shall not here recur to the generosity of the French guards, in snatching from the fury of the populace their adversaries the body guards : this sentiment has always characterized the French military. But we can never sufficiently admire that rapid and instantaneous transition of the multitude from rage and popular fury, on finding themselves the victims of famine and of treachery, to the transports of sensibility and compassion toward the body guards, as soon as they saw them disarmed and submissive ; to the most frank and open confidence in their governors upon the least demonstration of sincerity on their part. Such is the French nation, such were the Athenians ; hasty, animated, passionate, but honest. What pictures do they present, at once affecting and grotesque, at once lamentable and ridiculous ! We are shocked and irritated, we are moved to tenderness and admiration : we behold the ridiculous,

culous, the horrible, and the sublime touching on, and contrasting with each other. We see the *Poissardes*, and the whole body of the populace, besieging the castle of Versailles, and taking prisoner their king; we see almost at the same instant the same people (a people full of animation and humanity!) intoxicated with delight at possessing their king, dancing and leaping around his carriage. No, never were scenes like these conceived even by the vast and eccentric imagination of a Callot, a Hogarth, or a Teniers!

A work has lately appeared, intitled *The History of the Conspiracy of d'Orleans*, whose author, possessing a command of style, and a considerable portion of talent, has, however, intentionally concealed the true causes of many of the events which he relates. I say intentionally, for it is impossible, without the most glaring partiality, to deny the faults of which the royal family and the body guards were guilty in the orgies which preceded those disastrous days which we have just described. This writer adds, that the candidates for admission into the Jacobin society were required to be notoriously immoral, and that those who had been disgraced by public punishment were elected in preference. This is neither true nor probable: there were in the
society

society many virtuous men; but the leaders were in general villains. It is certain that the Duke d'Orleans, Mirabeau, and Laclos who has so well delineated himself, that is, as a compound of crimes and artifice, in his romance, *les Liaisons dangereuses*, and, in short, all the Orleanist party, took advantage of the imprudence of the court, to cause the insurrections of the people, and the slaughter of the royal family. We shall here observe, once for all, that there were two causes which principally contributed to reduce the people to famine, to inflame their passions, and to urge them to insurrection; one was the influence of the faction of d'Orleans, the other that of the court-party. The Duke d'Orleans was assisted by Mirabeau, whose ambition was to become one day the prime minister of that prince. It appears also that Necker, though not attached to him, dared not to oppose his measures: it is at least certain that most of his connections, and his whole family, particularly the Baroness de Staël were really Orleanists. All the violent journalists were subservient to this faction, many of them through ignorance, and from a belief that in the beginning of a revolution it was impossible to carry too far the boldness of their conceptions, and the warmth of their imaginations. The court had in its favour the Royalist writers. Our revolution

volution has given the strongest proof that the tongue is a weapon no less formidable than the sword. Within the kingdom, the revolution was a real paper war, a war no less fatal in its consequences than any other. Fortunately d'Orleans was of a timid and dastardly disposition, equally unworthy a prince and a conspirator. His weakness alone three or four times prevented him from reaping the fruit of his crimes. He tasted the odious pleasure of revenge; but he might have done more. Cromwell, in his place, would have seized on that throne which he had rendered vacant. There is no doubt that if d'Orleans, on the days of the 5th and 6th of October, had appeared, sword in hand, at the head of the conspirators, the sovereign power would have fallen into his hands. We shall hereafter see that Mirabeau had as little the genius, though perhaps he possessed all the audacity of a conspirator. It was the same with Robespierre; it was the same with Marat. When therefore the Barons de Staël, in one of her late publications, asserts, that our revolution has abounded with great men, she assuredly could not allude to a La Fayette, to a Dumouriez, or to any other of our conspirators: several of them have surpassed those of former days in villany; but they have neither equalled them in courage nor in genius.

genius. The most contemptible of all was la Fayette; he opposed but feebly the return of d'Orleans; and he was unable to conquer either d'Orleans, Robespierre, or Marat. The Jacobins themselves, notwithstanding their great powers, were unable, from a want of union, to effect a change in the dynasty.

So little has hitherto been known of the particulars of this conspiracy, that it has been generally believed to be through mere want of foresight, through the grossest inexperience, that la Fayette went to the house of his relation the Prince de Poix. The common opinion is, that he went to bed there, and gave himself up to a profound slumber; hence the surname of General *Morpheus* has been attached to him. There cannot be a more improbable supposition. Who can believe that General la Fayette should sleep in the midst of the tumult, the noise, the consternation which the massacres of the body guards spread through the whole town of Versailles? It is possible to sleep on the eve of a battle, but not during the battle itself; and at all events there could be no reason to sleep till eleven o'clock. It was not, however, till near that hour, and after he had doubtless heard of the bravery and success of the *ci-devant* French guards, that

la Fayette made his appearance. It was fear alone, but in fact a well-grounded fear, which obliged la Fayette to remain so long concealed. He did not pass his time in sleep, but in providing the necessary precautions to subdue the hired assassins of d'Orleans. D'Estaing pursued exactly the same conduct. This is the only means of explaining the absence of the two commanders of the armed force of Versailles and Paris, at a moment when every movement, every direction depended on them, and there could not be a greater breach of their duty than to remain in inactivity. D'Estaing, being a royalist, ought to have exposed his life without hesitation; as to la Fayette, it is evident that he was equally apprehensive of committing himself uselessly, and of losing his popularity. The royalists thought that la Fayette had also his own views of ambition, and even his own plot; and that he flattered himself with the hope of being either dictator or generalissimo, in case the royal family should be slaughtered. But this is supposing him to possess views of which his narrow and confined genius was incapable. La Fayette never saw beyond the moment: few generals have ever shewn less power of conception, or a smaller share of abilities. Here were three chiefs, la Fayette, d'Estaing, and d'Orleans, each of whom was absent at the moment most decisive

decisive for the attainment of their different objects. D'Orleans, it is said, mixed in the crowd, but it was in disguise, with a bludgeon in his hand, and not as a chief ought to shew himself; so that even, on this supposition, he might still have been considered as absent.

In this second revolution, we have as yet considered only the apparent and superficial circumstances. It would be, however, no less curious than instructive to trace the causes of so important an event. Let us see whether conjecture may not enable us, in some measure, to penetrate the veil. It is indeed possible that the apparent motives, that is to say, the insurrection and the famine of the people, were the real motives: on such a supposition, this event would be only the natural result of a popular fermentation, occasioned by the general scarcity, and by the orgies of the body guards.

Another supposition is this: the malcontents, the nobility, the superior clergy, and the parliaments, had formed a coalition: they grew bolder every day; already they openly ridiculed the operations of the national assembly; a secret pleasure sparkled in their eyes. To these cir-

cumstances were owing the senseless festivals of the two first days of October. The king was strongly suspected of wishing to retire to Metz in order to throw himself into the arms of his troops, and to retain by force the restitution of the ancient prerogatives of the crown. What could the city of Paris do in so delicate a conjuncture? Could it leave to despotism time to combine its measures, and to accomplish its revenge? What means were left to it but to pursue such a conduct as that which we have described? The city of Paris then would become the secret mover of all the events; it would endeavour to gain the troops of Versailles, and the regiment of Flanders; it would engage them by means of its courtezans and its bank bills; it would shower on the soldiers a profusion of gold and of pleasures.

A third supposition, no less probable than the two former, is, that these events of the 5th and 6th of October, were planned, directed, and paid by the aristocrats themselves, who hoped that this insurrection would still more decide the king to fly, and to kindle a civil war, which they thought the only means of effecting a counter-revolution.

The

The fourth supposition is, that the Duke d'Orleans alone executed what has been attributed to the league of the royalists. It is even asserted, but without any proof, that d'Orleans had disposed armed satellites at different distances on the road to Metz; so that if the king had fled thither he must have fallen into some of these ambuscades.

Which of these suppositions is the truth? Or is there any contradiction in concluding that they all have an equal foundation? If they were all four built on realities, they would, indeed, exhibit a most remarkable complication of events and intrigues; a confusion of hidden springs, of opposing projects, of jarring interests, hopes, and fears. We should behold four powerful causes, which, without any communication, without any knowledge of each other, employed the same means to produce ends of a very different or even opposite nature; four factions, of which one had, as its sole objects, punishment and vengeance; another proposed, by transferring the monarch to Paris, to secure to that city a pledge of peace, plenty, and freedom; the third meant to lead the king, by fraud or force, to Metz, in order to reign in his name; and the

fourth, to occasion his murder or his flight, in order to occupy his throne, either as regent, lieutenant-general, or protector. The two latter factions might have thought their success certain, their measures infallible : out of a hundred kings in the situation of Louis XVI. ninety-nine would have endeavoured to escape. He resisted all solicitation on that head ; or rather, the pusillanimity of his character made him change his project, when he saw that its execution was so difficult and dangerous. By departing, he would have hazarded both his crown and his life : he reaped more advantage from his weakness than he could possibly have gained from temerity. He threw himself into the arms of the Parisians, and he did well at the time ; for, though he has since ascended the scaffold at Paris, it was because he was so far from having the policy to support the constitution, that he always appeared its enemy, especially when he so imprudently surrounded himself with refractory priests.

The day after the arrival of the court at Paris, the Duke d'Orleans had an interview, and a long conversation with the king ; he had previously had a conference with M. de la Fayette, who threatened him with a blow ; an affront the most terrible, according to our customs, which can be offered

offered to a man of honour. The Duke d'Orleans bore it patiently. It is said, that M. de la Fayette had revealed to the king the whole conspiracy, had put into his hands the proofs of it, and had confounded the Duke in his presence. The day after this conference the Duke d'Orleans demanded of the assembly a passport, under pretence that he was charged with a mission from the king to England, and he set off for London the same day. This pretended mission was evidently no more than an honourable exile. M. de Mirabeau on this occasion plainly evinced that he did not possess the genius requisite for a chief of conspirators: he might, by means of his party, have prevented the Duke d'Orleans from obeying, and have prevailed on the people to demand his stay. The national assembly had decreed, that it would follow the king to Paris, and would not quit his person. More than two hundred deputies, who thought their lives in danger at Paris, had desired passports: the sitting was tumultuous, but at last the passports were refused. M. de Mirabeau, in the assembly, opposed the departure of the Duke d'Orleans, who, however, did not dare to appear in person, though strengthened by such a support. The evidence against him must have been of a very

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convincing

convincing nature to cause him thus to abandon the victory to his enemies, and to give up the defence of his own honour.

If the famine was partly organized by the agents of d'Orleans, it is evident that it also was, in part, by the court; since bread abounded in Paris the very day after the king's arrival. We may therefore infer, that there was a complication of conspiracies.

Before we proceed to consider the latter operations of the constituent assembly, we will here take a general survey of the two revolutions which we have just described.

We have advanced, from crisis to crisis, from prodigy to prodigy. The further we proceed in the history of the revolution, including under that general term, the eleven revolutions* that have

- * 1. The revolution of the 14th of July.
- 2. The revolution of the 5th and 6th of October.
- 3. The revolution of the acceptance of the constitution of 1791.
- 4. The revolution of the 10th of August 1792.
- 5. The revolution of the abolition of royalty and the proclamation of the republic.
- 6. The revolution on the punishment of the king.
- 7. The

have taken place in the seven years which have elapsed during our revolution, the more rapidly shall we behold these prodigies succeed and surpass each other, as it were, in emulation. Romance itself never exhibited so grand a train of incidents. We shall here develop the causes of the two first of these astonishing revolutions,

In analyzing what has prepared and forwarded the revolution in general, we are quite astonished to behold a host of causes, foreign to each other, unite, as it were, by miracle, for its production : so that, had only one of these causes been suppressed, the revolution would not have happened, or would have been produced much later, and in a quite different manner*. The

7. The revolution of the 31st of May, the epoch of the commencement of the decemvirate.

8. The revolution on the acceptance of the constitution of 1793.

9. The revolution of the 9th of Thermidor, the epoch of the fall of the decemvirs.

10. The revolution of the constitution of 1795.

11. The revolution of the 13th Vendemiaire.

* There are causes of a still more ancient date, which contributed to our revolution ; among these we may reckon printing, navigation, and the American revolution : hence we see the ignorance of those who have called our revolution a mere exertion of popular vengeance against the nobility.

disorder

disorder of the finances certainly contributed to it, but in so distant a manner, that it can hardly be reckoned among the causes. It is, especially in finance, that a government, which does not know the whole extent of its own wishes, is an awkward and feeble government. I shall, however, place this first in the list of causes. It is also certain, that we should not have had a revolution but for the States General: I reckon, therefore, as the second cause, the parliaments, which first demanded the convocation of those very states by whom they were themselves overthrown. The third cause which I shall mention is the nobility, who favoured the demands of the people through an hatred of the court and of those few favourites, in whom all authority was concentrated. We may consider, as a fourth cause, the invitation made by the archbishop of Sens, when prime minister, to all the men of talents in the kingdom to publish their opinions on the convocation of the States. From this arose that profusion of writings so bold, free, and independent, and too often so inflammatory and anarchical. The fifth cause was that sort of chance which determined M. Necker to grant to the Tiers-Etat a representation equal to that of the two Orders united: we say a sort of chance, because M. Necker had neither energy nor
genius

genius sufficient to conceive a plan of his own; his ambition was only to adapt his measures to all parties. He was devoted to d'Orleans; but he wished to appear faithful to the king. He wished at the same time to conciliate the popular favour; but he was particularly fearful of Mirabeau. He knew not that the surest means of displeasing all parties is to endeavour to satisfy all: out of a hundred persons who endeavour to trim between different parties, and to suit themselves to all factions, scarcely one will succeed; because, in times of revolution and political convulsion, the universal maxim is, *he who is not for us is against us*. The sixth cause was the obstinate refusal of the nobility to verify the powers in common; had it not been for this refusal, we should have had indeed a revolution, but of a different and far more moderate kind. The seventh cause was the imprudence of the court in resolving to shut up the hall of the States General, and to employ the armed force. We may notice, as the eighth cause, the temporising and irresolute conduct of the clergy, who fluctuated between the nobility and the commons, at a moment when every thing depended on decision. The defection of the parochial ministers, who came to join the Tiers-Etat, was the natural result

result of these fluctuations. I find a ninth cause in the seduction and patriotism of the French guards, and in the liberality of the Palais Royal, that is to say, of the Duke d'Orleans, and some other individuals, to the soldiers of the different corps which came to Paris. Who would have supposed, that from the midst of a city, once peopled with Sybarites and debauchees, from the centre of the most Asiatic luxury and effeminacy, from the manufactories of pleasure, the arsenals of dissipation, should burst such torrents of information; and that such a place should become the radiating point of the revolution? The tenth cause was the want of all arrangement and all concert in the taking possession of Paris, by the foreign troops, on the 12th of July, and their delay in attacking the capital, a delay which gave time to the Parisians to prepare their measures. If M. de Maillebois had been chosen instead of M. de Broglio, this attack would have been conducted with much more system and impetuosity; and the capital, perhaps, would have been entirely subdued. M. d'Artois proposed M. d'Maillebois, at the moment when M. de Broglio was just chosen: so frequently does the destiny of empires and of revolutions depend on the decision of a single minute. In
like

like manner we escaped a civil war at that period, because a single man, the Duke de Liancourt, prevailed on the king not to depart. The eleventh cause was the new kind of magistracy, which on a sudden organized itself for the protection of Paris. I perceive a twelfth cause in the surrender of the Bastille, which would have been relieved at ten o'clock, and which was so feebly defended. A thirteenth cause is to be found in the person of M. de Mirabeau, who felt himself born to occupy a place in the States General of France, (if the talent of overturning every thing, without a power of rebuilding it, was a qualification for such a situation,) and who was not ignorant that he would find great obstacles to his wishes, especially after having published his *Secret History of the Court of Berlin*. He employed intrigue to overcome these obstacles, and to be elected. As a nobleman of Provence, he addressed himself to his own order, and was rejected. The nobility knew not the power of a man of genius; they were punished for their error. Mirabeau was welcomed by the Tiers-Etat, and he entered the lists against the nobility with the triple armour of principles, resentment, and talents. Mirabeau ought to be considered as a weight in the balance: place
this

this weight in the opposite scale, and you have an upper chamber of legislation, a revolution totally different. I estimate, as a fourteenth cause, the faction of d'Orleans, which, by its profusion and by its intrigues, so powerfully counteracted the projects of the court, and served the revolution without intending to serve it. Finally, the fifteenth and last cause was the conduct of the Tiers-Etat in the States General. Whilst the court, the nobility, and the clergy, heaped faults upon faults, the Tiers-Etat made not one false step; all its movements were arranged, considered, and supported with the most profound policy. What men too were there to be found in all the Orders! What an assemblage of talents! A Mirabeau, so eloquent as a disputant in the tribune, and so powerful by the colossal elevation of his popularity; a Lally Tolendal, still greater in the eloquence of the pen; a Syeyes, armed with logical precision and metaphysical accuracy; a Mounier, the most informed of all in matters of government; a Thouret, so luminous in arrangement; a Malonet, a Roederer, a Dupont, a Cazales, a Rabaut, a Chapelier, a Garat, a Gregoire, a Taleyrand, Bishop of Autun, a d'Entraigues, a Montesquieu. We must not forget the American revolution.

lution, which was less bloody, because it had fewer enemies of all kinds, and because it had not that profusion of writings which so much influenced our revolution.

Let us now take a general view of the operations of the constituent body, both those which we have hitherto traced, and those of which we have to give an account hereafter. We cannot but applaud the mass of its labours; above all, the new division of the empire, a vast and profound idea of the Abbé Syeyes: we cannot but behold, with admiration, the career of honours opened to all ranks in society; the creation, or rather the revival of the municipal administrations; the suppression of monks, those parasitical and corrupting plants of the parliaments, those rapacious tribunals, and of *lettres de cachet*; the clerical colossus overthrown, and its possessions brought into circulation; and finally, a new judicial and military system, defective, without doubt, but easy to be perfected.

It may, however, be questioned, whether this assembly has not too far extended the principles of philosophy and reason. Have they not reduced the revolution almost to the nullity of a mathematical point in the attempt to render it too metaphysical?

metaphysical? Have they not gone much too far? Have they not destroyed more than they have created, overturned more than they have built? Have they not fallen into the error of Joseph II.? He who wishes to reform too much at once, runs a hazard of doing nothing; and fundamental innovations in an empire are those in which we ought to leave more to time than to the axe of reformation. Our revolution is the strongest instance of this grand truth which history affords. Nothing could be more fatal as a measure of policy, nor more inimical to the revolution itself than that progress of rapacity and destruction; not to mention the innumerable obstacles and conspiracies which it was continually necessary to quell; not to mention the blood which even yet flows, the victims which it has been necessary to sacrifice. We shall expatiate more fully on this reflection, when we shall have reached the end of the session of that assembly.

BOOK XVI.

Terror and Flight of several Deputies, amongst whom are Messrs. Mounier and Lally Tolendal.

—Proclamation of the Rights of the French Nation.—Detailed View of the Proceedings of the Assembly, of the whole internal Organization of the Empire, and of all the Reforms.

TERROR occasioned several deputies to withdraw from their situation. Amongst those whose flight was most regretted were Messrs. Lally Tolendal and Mounier. The assembly signalized the last moments of its stay at Versailles by a solemn proclamation of the rights of the French nation, rights which belong alike to all nations. In the course of this history we shall point out the defects of this declaration.

It was on Monday the 19th of October, that the representatives of the French nation held their first sitting at Paris. Free from the anxieties with which it had been constantly agitated, the assembly hastened to draw up the constitution. They strenuously exerted themselves also in calming the disorders which broke out in different places during this long suspension of the laws.

laws. In the space of three months they organized the municipalities and the primary assemblies; they fixed the qualifications of citizens for elections, regulated the most urgent affairs of taxation, abolished *lettres de cachet*, received accounts of the amount of pensions, augmented the pay of the army, established the *caisse de l'extraordinaire*, and introduced œconomy into the regulations of the marine. Presently there existed neither feudal rights nor privileges, neither orders nor corporations. They took advantage of the public enthusiasm to annihilate for ever the provincial privileges. Those privileges had been in times of despotism the only hope of the friends of liberty; but circumstances were no longer the same: the provinces felt this truth, and readily submitted to the new order of things. The very word *province* disappeared from our language.

It would be impossible to relate all the means that were employed to diminish the credit of the national assembly, to interrupt its operations, and to prevent their execution. There was an immense fabrication of books and journals hired to effect a counter-revolution; for that was the word they used, a word which, as well as *arrestation*, *démonétisation*, and many similar ones, has remained

remained in our language, because long custom must ultimately prevail. It was thought that the people might be dazzled by the publishing ten times as many writings against the national assembly as had appeared in its favour; and to this employment an innumerable multitude of presses were devoted both in France and in foreign countries. Every kind of composition was employed; odes, songs, epigrams, tragedies, satires, pamphlets, succeeded each other with a rapidity only equalled by the rage which inspired them. The assembly exhibited the noble example of despising this deluge of calumny; it had the prudence not to raise such authors, by persecution, to an importance which they could not otherwise attain.

Whilst the national assembly with one hand combated the enemies of liberty, with the other it laid the foundation and elevated the structure of the constitution. After having recognized the rights of man, it proclaimed those of a citizen, and sought to establish the necessary harmony between the representatives and the government, by forming bonds of mutual union and confidence, very different from the detestable connection which formerly existed between the government and the people. But they pre-

vented too powerful a controul of the monarch over the legislative body : and at the same time opposed an invincible barrier to his usurpations, by re-establishing the nation in its just right of granting or refusing taxes. Finally, in order to ensure personal security against the attacks both of the legislators and the monarch, they were prohibited in all cases from exercising the judicial power. An uniformity of judicial proceeding was established for the whole empire, and the forms of sanctioning and promulgating the laws were determined.

We shall here unfold this vast and striking system of the new division of the empire, the organization of the legislative and electoral bodies, the general administration of the primary assemblies, of departments, districts, and municipalities, the eligibility to public functions, and the enrolment of citizens. We shall follow this immense plan into all its ramifications: nothing can be so instructive, so grand, and so interesting as this picture of the whole internal economy of a vast empire, and of all the reforms which it was necessary to make: it presents to view a social body rising to new youth after centuries of decrepitude and corruption. This plan, moreover, has since established itself, and

and we ought to know it well in order to appreciate justly the changes which the convention has since made in it, and certainly with reason, in the constitution of 1795.

It was, no doubt, a great thing, to have ensured the permanence of the legislative body, and to have declared the rights of men and of the French people; but this was but little relatively to what remained. It was decreed that the laws should be made by the representatives of the nation; in order to have such representatives election was necessary; and it followed as a consequence from the principle of representative government, (the only form adapted to a free nation,) that the different branches of the subordinate powers should be entrusted to citizens fairly elected by the people. It was necessary, therefore, to establish a proportional equality of representation, first, between the sections of the empire, and secondly, between the different parts of each section; it was necessary to prescribe a simple and immutable order of election; to determine with precision the rank which each class of administration should hold in the order of the public powers; to define the nature and extent of their authority; in a word, it was necessary, from the heterogeneous ruins of the ancient constitution, to create and organize a

new body politic, and to elevate on a common basis, the double edifice of the national and provincial, or rather the departmental and municipal representation. Such was the important task of our legislators, a task inspiring apprehension from the novelty and boldness of its plan, the immense extent of its ramifications, and the endless number of obstacles, physical and moral, which the genius of liberty, and the united exertion of so enlightened an assembly, alone could overcome.

The superficial extent of the country had been for ages parcelled out and divided in as many different ways as there were modes of administration in the state. It was divided into provinces by the political order of things, into governments by the military order, into generalities and stewardships by the administrative order, into dioceses by the ecclesiastical order, and by the judicial order into bailiwicks or jurisdictions of seneschals, and into jurisdictions of parliaments. These antique divisions seemed like ruins cast together by chance, and without any political, moral, or even local combination; they had no mutual connection or proportion, either in regard to population or to extent of territory. It was necessary to bring together the administrators

trators and the subjects of administration, and to engage in those administrations the greatest possible number of citizens, in order to promote, to the highest decree, and with the greatest rapidity, the public spirit of information, that is to say, its real energy and power. It appeared also, that the proportion of the contributions ought, in a certain measure, to enter into that of the national representation and administration.

It was thought, with reason, that by combining together these three elements, they would mutually balance and correct each other; and that the national representation ought to be constituted, as nearly as possible, on the compound ratio of territory, contribution, and population. It was decreed, 1st, To distribute the kingdom, both for purposes of representation and administration, into eighty-three grand divisions, bearing the name of *departments*, of nearly three hundred and eighty square leagues each, diverging from Paris, as a centre, in every direction to the frontiers. 2dly, To divide each department into *districts*, the number of which should not be less than three, nor greater than nine. 3dly, To subdivide each district into *cantons*, of four square leagues each. In reference to this triple division of territory, three

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degrees were established in the hierarchy of the administrative assemblies ; but in the elective, only two were preserved, the first in those of the canton, or primary assemblies, which contain the true personal basis of representation ; and the second in the assemblies of department, formed by a junction of all the electors within its precincts. The number of national representatives was fixed at that of the departments multiplied by nine, and it was distributed among them, according to the triple basis of territory, population, and direct contribution ; a system no less bold in conception, than easy and simple in execution. As the functions of the primary and electoral assemblies were limited to election, and as every kind of restrictive instruction was declared contrary both to the nature of the legislative body, which is in its very essence deliberative, and to the character of the deputies, who are not representatives of a department, but of the whole nation, it was ordained, that the certificate of election should be the only deed entrusted by the electors to the representatives.

The municipalities presented less difficulty ; but the conditions required for eligibility to the different degrees of national representation or administration,

administration, presented for solution several great political and moral problems; and it appeared difficult to reconcile the rights of man with those of a citizen, the principles of liberty and equality with the general interests of the empire. It was decreed, that in order to vote in the primary assemblies, it was requisite to be an active citizen, that is, to be, by birth, or naturalization, a Frenchman, to have been domiciliated in the city or canton for at least a year preceding, to pay a direct contribution, and to produce the act of civic enrollment.

This system of government, of which no age or country presented a model, was conceived by the profound and analytical genius of the Abbé Syeyes, and developed with the clearness and precision of M. Thouret: the slight defects which it contained have been since corrected.

Nevertheless the malcontents redoubled their efforts. They had always built their hopes on the troops of the line: but the different regiments exhibited with emulation the strongest proof of patriotism. The parliaments, supported by a crowd of practitioners, both advocates and solicitors, employed all the chicanery of their profession; the clergy used those weapons

pons which were peculiar to them; but the patriots were by no means idle. The citizens of Brittany and Anjou associated together in an armed confederacy. Every where were seen bands of citizens collected by thousands, and arising, as it were, from beneath the earth, who unanimously swore to live free or to die.

The assembly marked its progress by new benefits: it suppressed the impious and sterilizing vows of the religious orders, and allowed a fixed support for the individuals of both sexes, who had buried themselves alive in the gloom of the cloisters; it suppressed the taxes on leather, on oil, and on soap, and substituted others less burdensome in their place. It abolished the *Gabelle* *, and the duty on tobacco; it made a code of regulations for the redemption of all feudal rights; it employed itself on the organization of the judicial power, and decreed the freedom of commerce in India. But the decree by which it suppressed titles and armorial devices, although a consequence of the abolition of nobility, of feudalism, and of privileges, affected the noble and privileged classes more than any other of its decrees. If the nobility showed so strong an attachment to these toys, these exterior and puerile marks of human vanity, it was be-

* The duty on salt.

cause they knew their power in the eyes of the vulgar. When, therefore, it had been resolved to abolish nobility and privileges, it was right to break the talisman on which this order founded the hope of regaining, sooner or later, their power.

Before I proceed to the new attempts of the enemies of public order, I have to speak of the famous proceedings instituted at the Châtelet against the authors of the massacres of the 5th and 6th of October. This tribunal was alike insensible to menaces and bribes: it determined, that there was reason to issue arrests against d'Orleans and Mirabeau. What disgrace, what evils, what troubles, would France have been spared, if this decree had been permitted to be executed! The next day a deputation from the Châtelet presented all the documents to the national assembly. The veil was now torn off, and the only question was, whether the Châtelet would be permitted to continue this process. Such a question ought never to have been agitated. Mirabeau was made judge in his own cause; he voted that the national assembly should decree, that its committee of inquiry should make a report to it on the charges brought against the national representatives. The royalists

alists had the weakness to let slip this opportunity : thus we see that, besides the populace themselves, nothing is more like the populace, that is, more irresolute and absurd, than a numerous assembly. A proof of this assertion appears in the manner in which the constituent body suffered themselves to be governed by Mirabeau, when he threatened them to call out his troops, that is to say, the pikemen of the Fauxbourgs. Another proof appears in the weakness with which the convention a long while suffered itself to be decimated by so petty and contemptible a tyrant as Robespierre.—To return to the proceedings of the Châtelet : the Abbé Maury opposed Mirabeau's motion but weakly, and without saying a word of the criminals : nor did Cazalés, on this occasion, display his usual courage. The left side of the assembly prevailed by means of the decree which forbade a deputy to be proceeded against judicially, without permission of the assembly. We cannot here pass over in silence the noble and laconic answer which the queen made to the commissioners of the Châtelet, who, in the early stages of the proceeding, waited on her to receive her deposition : “ I saw,” said she, “ every thing ; “ I heard every thing ; I have forgotten every “ thing.”

BOOK XVII.

New Conspiracies.—The Austrian Committee.—Murder of a Baker.—Conspiracy and heroic Death of the Marquis de Favras.—Decree which declares the Equality of Punishments for all Classes of Citizens.—Admirable Conduct of the District of St. Honoré toward the Relations of the two Brothers Agasse.—Remarkable Expression of the Bishop of Autun, in an Address to the French Nation.—A Civic Crown adjudged to a young Englishman.

THE enemies of the public weal ceased not to try all the schemes in their power: they called themselves *the King's Friends*; and they asserted that he was not free. Those who seated themselves to the right of the president, called the others the *enragés*: whilst the latter gave to the right side the appellation of *the blacks*. Names have always served parties as rallying signals. Certain private meetings were held at the queen's apartments; and these meetings were called *the Austrian committee*.

Whilst all the different conspiracies agitated, in as many different manners, the interior of France,

and whilst the executive power and the ministers secretly favoured them by inactivity, and affected want of power, attempts were made abroad to excite an hostile confederacy of crowned heads. In order to render the national guards contemptible, a feigned contempt was shown toward them: they were called *the blues*, from the colour of their uniform: and it was said, that, like blue earthen ware, they could not stand the fire. The unheard-of prodigies of valour which those brave troops have since performed, have most honourably avenged them of this sarcasm. It was thus that the Persians ridiculed the Greeks, and were afterwards beaten by them.

The conspirators, that is to say, the court, on one side, and the faction of d'Orleans on the other*, organized famine. The mobs began again to assemble around the doors of the bakers. One of these unhappy men became an innocent and lamented victim to the popular fury, from which he could not be delivered. The national assembly, deeply afflicted

* We ought to observe, that for the sake of conforming to general custom, we call the party of the court *Royalists*, and those of d'Orleans *Anarchists*: the latter may be called *Royalists*, since they meant to have placed d'Orleans on the throne.

at this event, no less mournful than unforeseen, passed a decree against riotous assemblages. *Martial law* was decreed on the plans of Messrs. Target and Mirabeau the elder. This law, unknown to the Romans, was invented by the English, and seems but little to suit a free people: an evil-minded magistrate or commander may abuse it, to the violation both of public and private liberty.

An event of another kind soon occupied the attention of the public, and again affected the general sensibility. The popular fury had caused a baker to perish without permitting his innocence to be legally proved. Now it was the sword of the law which struck, perhaps, an innocent man, or at least a man not legally convicted of guilt, which, in the eye of the law, is equivalent to innocence. The preceding details have shown, that great criminals were spared, and even their names studiously concealed: amongst these were *Monsieur* the king's brother, and M. de Luxembourg. M. de Favras, therefore, whether guilty or not, ought to have been acquitted: he was the hero and the martyr of a new conspiracy, which fortunately appeared only within the walls of the Châtelet. The national assembly had

had provisionally given to this tribunal the power of judging all crimes of *lèse nation*, without defining these crimes, which have but too often been with us, what the *crimen læsæ majestatis* was with Tiberius, a pretence, and a weapon for slaughtering the innocent. The assembly has since adopted the English forms of criminal process by *jury*, forms favourable to the accused and dictated by humanity. The publicity of evidence and of judgment is the only safeguard of the weak : nor, alas ! are even these means always sufficient to deliver them from the power of influence and riches.

M. de Favras, born with an enterprising genius and an exalted ambition, had passed his life in the continual meditation of different projects ; successively a musqueteer, a captain of dragoons, and first lieutenant of the Swiss guards of Monsieur ; he had resigned the latter station in order to go to Vienna to pursue some claims of Madame de Favras, who was by birth Princess of Anhalt-Schaumbourg. It was after his return from this journey that he gave himself up to the study of finance. From this he was diverted in 1785, by the troubles in Holland, which opened to him a career more suited to his active and enterprising spirit. He set off with the view of raising a
legion

legion for the service of the United Provinces. At this period commenced his connections with a recruiting-officer named Tourcaty, whose assistance he thought might be useful to him. But the pacification which so speedily followed the armed mediation of Prussia obliged him to renounce his projects, and to resume his labours relative to the public debt. The satisfactory account of his plan, which was given to the minister by a commission appointed to examine it, augmented his eagerness to have it discussed by the national assembly. The insurrection of Brabant, however, and the events which followed it, filled his ardent imagination with new projects. He connected the plan of a counter-revolution in Holland with a revolution in Brabant, and perhaps with a counter-revolution in France: at least he asserted that the execution of his schemes would have been very useful to his country, and we well know what one of the privileged orders meant by the expression "useful to his country." It is probable, however, that his military ideas were subordinate to those which he had conceived for the liquidation of the public debt, and that he did not resume the former until he had lost all hope of success with the latter. He possessed great talents, and a still greater ambition. He testified a strong at-

tachment to the royal authority, and very little satisfaction at the free government. He was one of those entrusted with the secret of the first attempt to carry the royal family to Metz. On the 2d of October he had worn the white cockade; and, on the day of the irruption of the Parisian women into Versailles, he had begged M. de Saint Priest to order horses from the king's stables to be given to him, and a certain number of volunteers, who would disperse the banditti, and seize their cannon.

He confessed that after the national assembly and the king came to fix their residence at Paris, he was charged to watch the Fauxbourg Saint Antoine, from which much danger was apprehended, and that he received a hundred Louis d'ors on account of this employment from M. de Luxembourg. He resumed his former connection with M. Tourcaty, to whom, in the month of July or September, he revealed the principal circumstances of an approaching counter-revolution, which was to be effected in France, by carrying off the king and the royal family. M. Tourcaty had a friend named Morel, a recruiting officer like himself, to whom he related all the strange communications which had been made to him. Morel hastened to give information of the
the

the whole to the commander in chief of the national guard of Paris. Messrs. Morel and Tourcary asserted that M. de Favras had revealed to them the plan of a counter-revolution projected by himself. Twelve hundred horse were to be assembled at Versailles, from whence they were to set off, on a fixed day, in three columns, for Paris. A part of the guards receiving pay, and of the Swiss, together with a great number of conspirators from the provinces were to join the cavalry. On their arrival they were to have seized the guard, whom they would have prevented from re-entering Paris, by disposing their posts within the city so as to cut off their passage; if the guard had made a strong resistance, they were all to have been massacred. Four hundred men would have been ordered to murder M. de la Fayette *. Four hundred more would have seized at once Messrs. Bailly and Necker, and after having spiked the cannon which they could not bring away, they were all to have united in the *Champs Elysées*, in order to

* The part of the plan relative to the assassination of M. de la Fayette was, according to the account of the informers, soon after changed. It was thought better to trust this business to four sure men. It is easy to see the absurdity and want of resources which this plan, for carrying off the king, displayed; yet, in the times in which we live, every thing is credible, and every thing is possible.

enter the Thuilleries together, and make themselves masters of that station. Negotiations were entered into for twenty thousand Swiss, twelve thousand Germans, and twelve thousand Sardinians, who, with the regiments which remained faithful, and the malcontents who would have declared for the king when he had reached the frontier, would have formed an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men. They would have then marched against Paris, and by cutting off both the upper and lower part of the river, would have reduced the city by famine. This conspiracy would soon have broken out; for one thousand two hundred horses were already at Versailles, and forty waggons at Saint Denys.

It was necessary to engage in the plot a part of the guards receiving pay, and to arm them against the city militia. M. Marquié, formerly a serjeant in the French guards, and now sub-lieutenant of a company of grenadiers of the centre, had, on the 6th of October, saved the lives of several of the body guards, and on the road from Versailles, he could not refrain from tears at the dangerous situation of the royal family. His grief was remarked by Madame Elizabeth; she even inquired his name. Such was the man on whom M. de Favras, without knowing

knowing him more fully, thought he could reckon to gain the paid troops, which was the most difficult part of his plan. He requested to meet him at two or three different rendezvous. The last time he put into his hands, but without explaining himself any further, a counter-revolutionary pamphlet, intitled, *Open your Eyes*, desiring him to read it attentively to his grenadiers, and to give him the names and addresses of those persons in his regiment to whom he might distribute it. In the meanwhile M. de Favras negotiated a loan of two millions *, through the agency of M. Morel. M. Chomel, a Dutch refugee, on the 3d of December, promised, in the name of a company of Dutch merchants, to advance this sum. It has since appeared that M. Chomel was an agent of the committee of research, since continued under the title of Committee of General Safety : and it is said that it was the committee that dictated the conditions of this pretended loan. It is certain, however, that the loan was not realised, and that new measures were adopted when it was known to be made on the account, and in the name of Monsieur, the king's brother.

* 83,333 *l.* sterling.

Monfieur was denounced in the *placards* all over Paris, as being at the head of this conspiracy. This prince alarmed, repaired on the 26th to the Hotel de Ville, and presented the first example of a king's brother appearing to justify himself before his fellow-citizens. A few days afterwards M. de Favras was denounced at the Châtelet by the procurator Syndic of the commune, arrested, and committed to the prison of that tribunal. Public opinion had stigmatised the members of the Châtelet with a strong accusation of aristocracy; but this very suspicion became an object of real apprehension to the accused. However inclined they might have been to save him, they dared no longer to brave the general indignation. The combined movements which were making at that time to bring on a great explosion, do not prove that M. de Favras was its author; but they at least prove that there was a conspiracy, with regard to which he might probably have afforded much information. At Versailles near two thousand workmen rose, and caused bread and meat to be assessed at eight sols per pound. At Paris a report was spread that M. de Favras was to be released: the people rose against the Châtelet, and force was necessary to dissipate the seditious. It is very probable that

that the people were excited to tumult, only that M. de Favras might be delivered to them, and thus the indiscreet confessions which he might make before his judge might be prevented. As for him, tranquil amidst all the dangers which surrounded him, he displayed a firmness worthy a better cause. He refuted the two principal witnesses from their own evidence: he shewed that they disagreed, both as to the place and time in which they said they had received these pretended communications; finally, he objected to them on the ground of the law, which does not admit the evidence of an informer. But a third and much more formidable witness appeared against him, and corroborated the depositions of the two others; it was M. Chomel. He declared that he knew nothing of the project of invading Paris with an armed force, but he deposed that M. de Favras had communicated to him another plan, as being necessary to prevent the dismemberment of the monarchy: this project, he said, it appeared to him, was to collect an army of the malcontents on the frontiers of Germany and Flanders, in order to seize on different posts from Troyes in Champagne to Amiens; that it was proposed to gain over a great part of the French guards; and that in case of necessity they depended on a reinforcement,

ment of twenty thousand troops from the neighbouring princes of Germany, an equal number of Sardinians, and a Spanish army. This plan seems to present the ground-work of that contained in the depositions of Messrs. Morel and Tourcaty: nor is it at all surprising that two men, engaged only in the recruiting service, should have misrepresented ideas which they did not perhaps perfectly comprehend. The undoubted testimony of M. Chomel established the facts, and if these were not sufficient to prove the real particulars of the conspiracy, they were at least enough to prove that conspiracy existed. But who was its author, who its chiefs, and whether it were merely an ideal project, were questions to which the whole evidence afforded no answer. It seems, at first sight, very extraordinary, that the leader of a conspiracy, watched for three months together, by order of a most active committee, should not leave any traces of his proceedings, any real evidence of his plots, any document sufficient for his conviction? What became of the one thousand two hundred horses and the forty waggons? Did his conversations with M. Marquié sufficiently establish his evil designs? The most important fact, the delivery of the pamphlet, was differently related by the different witnesses. M. Morel deposed, that
M. de

M. de Favras, in delivering it to M. Marquié, said to him, "This is for yourself," and that no mention was made of reading it to the grenadiers. If he demanded the list of those to whom he should send the pamphlet, why was not this opportunity made use of to obtain an undeniable proof against him.

There were much heavier accusations against M. Augeard, who was arrested at the same time : his project of carrying off the king, and his own journey to Metz for that purpose, were written by himself, and communicated by him to M. de Clermont Tonnerre, at that time bishop of Châlons. He was, moreover, of a restless disposition : he had formerly caballed against the despotism, and afterwards against liberty, and under both forms of government he was declared innocent.

If any thing can lead us to believe in the existence of a fatality, or an inevitable destiny, it is the different success of persons in circumstances exactly similar. The lot of M. de Favras was no less mournful than that of Augeard was fortunate. Never was there an instance of greater strength of mind, of a more energetic

energetic character, or of a more courageous soul. It was on the 30th of January that his sentence was to be pronounced. M. de Favras always asserted, that his revolutionary projects regarded only Flanders and Holland. At length, a final report of the trial was delivered in on the 18th of February; and after a deliberation of six hours, he was condemned to be hanged. Whilst they were proceeding to sentence, a blood-thirsty multitude demanded his condemnation with the most terrible menaces. We cannot, however, believe that the judges could be influenced by so dastardly an apprehension: a magistrate would, doubtless, have perished, rather than have given up an innocent person to slaughter. These judges appear to have been guided by considerations of a superior nature, but which we are far from approving, because the exact observation of forms in criminal proceedings is essentially connected with general and individual freedom. Was M. de Favras, then, innocent? Yes, in the eye of the law, though not in that of reason; since it is impossible to doubt that a plot existed, and that the accused was one of its agents. Every probability inclines us to believe, that the particulars of this plot were known; and that the number and importance

portance of the persons engaged in it induced the judges to envelope the whole in obscurity.

When M. de Favras was led to the torture, he seemed, at the moment that the executioner and his assistants seized and bound him, to lose, for an instant, his courage. But he soon triumphed over this momentary weakness, and seemed to have paid this slight tribute to human nature, only that he might afterwards rise above humanity. His interrogator proposed to him a confessor. "From you?" cried he, with the indignation of oppressed innocence, "from you? A confessor of your choice! I should suspect him. I demand the minister of the parish of Saint Paul." M. de Favras, although feeling himself internally guilty, without doubt, shuddered to see that those who were at least as guilty as himself, were spared. When he came out of the Châtelet to go to execution the populace had the ferocity to clap their hands; and this cannibal scene was repeated on the bridge of Notre Dame. He seemed neither irritated nor afflicted at these expressions of barbarous joy; but conversed in a calm and serene manner with the minister of St. Paul's. Arriving at the principal door of the church of
Notre

Notre Dame, he descended from the cart with firmness, took from the hands of the registrar the decree of condemnation, which he read himself with a loud voice; and then addressing the people, in order to justify himself, he called God to witness his innocence. He then said, "Conduct me to the Hotel de Ville; I will there reveal some important secrets."

On his return from the church of Notre Dame, he seemed to change colour, but the expression of his countenance was still the same. All his features breathed tranquillity and peace, and commanded respect, sympathy, and silence. Arriving at the Hotel de Ville, he demanded leave to make some essential declarations; and himself dictated his will.

The offer made by M. de Favras to reveal some important facts deserved to be taken into consideration; but the magistrates did not wish them to be known. They feared also that so much delay would cause a popular insurrection. Above fifty thousand men had been crowded together in the Place de Grève from eight o'clock in the morning, incessantly bawling for the death of Favras. A great number of aristocrats waited for his execution with the same impatience.

More

More than four hundred persons of rank had taken flight, since his arrest. On this day a person of distinction was seen near the place de Grève, waiting with the greatest impatience for the moment of execution, of which he immediately ran to give notice to some other persons no less alarmed than himself. When night came on lamps were distributed through the square; some were even fixed upon the gallows. At eight o'clock M. de Favras descended from the Hotel de Ville with a firm and undaunted step. The whole multitude was affected; the minister of Saint Paul's burst into tears: M. de Favras alone was tranquil: he advanced towards the gibbet with a calm and majestic air. His tall and striking form, (he was above six feet,) his expressive countenance, his courageous calmness, his long flowing hair, all marked the greatness of the victim that was about to be sacrificed. The popular fury seemed, as it were, subdued by his appearance: and when at the foot of the scaffold he elevated his voice, and said, "Citizens, "I die innocent!" all the people shuddered. The executioner himself was moved, and said to him, with tears, "Cry louder, that they may hear you." M. de Favras, ascending the fatal ladder, repeated three times, with a loud voice,

"Citizens,

"Citizens, I die innocent! pray to God for me." The executioner and the sufferer remained immoveable. The greatest silence reigned through the whole square. Then turning, with a more than human serenity, he said, "Officer of justice, do your duty."

If I am asked, how it is possible that crime should be allied to so much greatness of soul? I shall answer, that Favras never believed that he had committed a crime. The interests of the king, in his eyes, legalized his projects. His example ought to teach weak men, who become the instruments of the powerful, that they are almost always the victims of their employers; and that the common price of their most generous attachment is to be meanly abandoned.

at by a monarch imprisoned by a sanguinary & cruel Rabb

Since I have heard nothing but conspiracies talked of, says the author of the *Correspondance de Paris* to one of his friends in Switzerland, I have been led to review in Sallust the history of one of the most famous conspiracies of antiquity. It is certain, that according to the customs of republican Rome, all the charges which were made public were not together sufficient to have authorised more than the arrest and trial of the unfortunate Favras. The conspiracy of Ca-

tiline was discovered at Rome by a man named Q. Curius, of a noble family, vain, audacious, and talkative, ready to do or to say any thing. His mistress, Fulvia, a woman also of noble birth, easily learnt his secret: she spoke of it without mentioning the name of her lover. No one, however, dared to arrest or prosecute Catiline. When Cicero was elected consul he gained over Curius, by means of Fulvia, and thus learnt all the designs of Catiline, but yet he did not dare to attempt any thing against his liberty. Curius informed Cicero that his house was to be surrounded, and forced open, and himself assassinated. Cicero only guarded his doors against the conspirators: yet Catiline was at Rome, and was not arrested, though all his proceedings were known to Cicero. Catiline even dared to make his appearance in the senate: he did more; when attacked and overpowered by Cicero's eloquence and reasoning, he answered only with menaces, and rushed out loading him with imprecations: no one stopped him. When was it, then, that Cicero thought himself authorised to come forward, and to act openly against Catiline and his accomplices? It was not until he had collected every kind of proof, written and testimonial; when, in concert with the Allobroges, who had given information of the conspiracy, he
caused

caused the conspirators to be surrounded, seized their papers, and apprehended, amongst them, a man named Vulturcius, charged with letters from Lentulus to Catiline; it was not till after having received the confessions of a great number of the accomplices, who promised to reveal every thing to him, upon his pledging the public faith to ensure their pardon. It was then alone that Rome and her consul considered Catiline as convicted, and the conspiracy as truly discovered and proved. How great was this respect for personal liberty and security! In reading Sallust, we cannot but observe a striking trait of resemblance between the two conspiracies: it is, that Crassus, a person of no less note at Rome than the king's brother in France, acted the same part in Catiline's conspiracy, as Monsieur did in that of Favras; that both were suspected of being authors and managers of the plots; and that the Romans would no more believe it of one, than the Parisians of the other.

I have hitherto spoken only of that part of M. de Favras' trial which was public; and on which I have further to observe, that Tourcaty and Morel, one or both of whom were informers, were not witnesses of sufficient purity and weight, nor sufficiently unimpeachable in point of

of morals. The ancient jurisprudence, unfortunately still in use on this point, decrees the punishment of death on the deposition of two witnesses, and calls these the necessary witnesses, because, if no others appear, these are deemed sufficient. Would not one think that such a law was extracted from the code of cannibals? The life of man ought in no case to depend on the testimony of two of his fellow-beings, whether they be villains, or supposed to be men of integrity.

I come to that part of the trial of Favras which is not generally known, but which was probably the decisive part: it was only revealed to the committee of research and to the judges; but, alas! should there be any part concealed in a criminal process? Is not the whole of society interested in knowing, whether or not the life and honour of a citizen be sported with? And why was all this mystery? It was because a number of rich and powerful men would have been implicated, and perhaps would have been found equally or even more guilty than M. de Favras. If it was resolved, that so many noble criminals should not perish, why was a man sacrificed who was only a criminal by them and for them? All should have been brought to trial or none. But a victim

was required to the people, perhaps to M. de la Fayette, who desired that the man who was accused of plotting against his life should perish. Could not M. de la Fayette, the commander of the national guard, have restrained the multitude until the end of the trial, as he had once during its continuance?

The death of M. de Favras leaves the mind impressed with sorrow, and exalted with admiration. What a man! and what a death! Never was greater constancy and firmness displayed. There is nothing astonishing in the calmness with which a general, at the head of his army, views death: the looks of his soldiers directed towards him, the participation of danger, the hope of avoiding it, the enthusiasm of honour, the intoxication of glory; all conspire to foster his courage, all animate, all inflame him: but to behold, without trembling, the executioner, the scaffold, the preparations of a certain and infamous death, to dictate a will of twenty pages with as much ease as in the closet, to hear, without emotion, thousands of threatening voices demanding one's blood, to see one's accomplices escape without accusing any one*; all this is

* It is true that he wished to reveal some important secrets; but it is not to be inferred that he would have named any person.

assuredly

assuredly the highest degree of intrepidity. If he had the intention of arming the nation against itself, he might be compared to Catiline ; if he only meant to carry off the king, he was a fanatic royalist : but on any supposition, his resignation, his firmness, his unalterable serenity, forbid every unworthy comparison. We may, in fine, conclude, that he was neither altogether innocent, nor altogether criminal. He was an ardent royalist, blind enough to imagine that he was even promoting the good of his country : he possessed an inflamed imagination, a mind strong, but misled. His death will for ever be an honourable monument of courage ; and this is, perhaps, the first time that the disgraceful punishment of the cord ever stamped a character of true grandeur and immortal heroism. If his judges were actuated by a fear for their own lives, they deserved to mount the scaffold in his stead. It would have been noble in them to have presented themselves to the people, and to have said to them, “ My friends, we have not sufficient evidence to condemn the Marquis de Favras ; we should be despicable prevaricators, unworthy your confidence, if we were to put him to death. Do with us as you please ; we would rather give up our property or our lives, than our integrity and honour.”

Good laws, as well as good actions, are pleasing to behold; they become the consolation and the hope of virtuous men. The philosopher views with particular pleasure those laws which are not only good in themselves, but operate to the extinction of former prejudices. Such was the law passed at this period by the national assembly, decreeing the equality of punishments to all classes of citizens. They also abolished the unjust prejudice which extended the infamy of criminal punishment to all the relations of the guilty person. The district of Saint Honoré at Paris, in order to strengthen this wise decree by an example, carried, in great state, with municipal and military honours, the nearest relations of the two brothers named Agasse, who were hung about the same time as M. de Favras, for having fabricated false bills in the national bank.

The aristocracy ceased not to roar against the national assembly, and to diffuse its poisonous torrents throughout the land, by means of a profusion of libels. These calumnies did honour to the assembly. The Bishop of Autun was right when he said, in the plan of address to the department, "So long as the malevolent calum-

" niate

“ niate your representatives, you will be free
“ and happy ; if they praised us, France might
“ look on herself as lost.”

The circulation of corn was still prevented in the interior. Vernon was a prey to the most terrible sedition. M. Planter, who was appointed in that city to superintend the supplies of provision for the capital, was twice in danger of being murdered : he owed his safety only to the intrepidity of a young Englishman, who exposed his own life to save him. The commune of Paris decreed him a civic crown : in presenting which to him the President said, “ When re-
“ turning to the arms of your family, you shall
“ receive the applauding smiles of your coun-
“ try ; tell them that you have seen on the
“ banks of the Seine a people, brave, feeling,
“ and generous, who have, indeed, been too
“ long frivolous, but who, having at length re-
“ gained their liberty, enjoy it with transports,
“ whenever it presents an opportunity of re-
“ warding virtue.” This event was also notified to the Revolution Society at London, which replied, by letter to the commune of Paris, with the affectionate sentiments of the most interesting fraternity.

B O O K XVIII.

Continuation of the Proceedings of the National Assembly.—Finances.—Reflections on M. Necker.—Presentation of a Native of Mont Blanc, 120 Years old, to the National Assembly.—Decree which rejects the insidious Motion of declaring the Catholic Religion national.—Striking Trait of Eloquence, by Mirabeau, on this Subject.—Sublime Inscription placed by Frederic over the Catholic Church at Berlin.—The Assembly decrees Four Hundred Millions of Assignats.—Curious Particulars relative to the Red-Book.—Office of the Treasury proposed by M. Necker.—His Scruples with regard to the Assignats.

It is not our design to relate all those events whose interest is merely local, but which are lost in the view of posterity in the crowd of great objects which the historian of the revolution has to delineate. It may easily be imagined, from the small number which we have described, how many irregularities, and even atrocities, were committed in a thousand different places. A revolution is a train of actions and reactions, a thousand particular evils necessarily flow from the

the general evils. Thus, amongst us, every city, every *commune*, has had its movements, its revolutions, its moments of anarchy, occasioned by the general anarchy spread over the whole empire : as in the planetary system each planet has a particular motion, independent of the common motion.

In the vast picture of our revolution, we should heap up useless volumes of description, if we detailed all the efforts of the privileged classes and their agents. We will not, therefore, take notice of the Bishop of Tréguier's incendiary address, intended to excite Brittany to insurrection, nor of a secret council of nobles at Toulouse, nor of the vain but audacious manoeuvres of the parliaments of Provence, Rennes, Metz, and Rouen. These were the expiring struggles of the ancient corporations, whose breath for a moment kindled some feeble sparks, which were soon extinguished.

The finances were an object of infinitely greater importance : they already formed a deep and almost incurable wound. The loans had not succeeded, the contribution of a fourth of personal incomes had not been so productive as was expected : and the receipt of taxes was almost suspended. M. Necker had not the genius
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which circumstances of such an imperious nature demanded. When, therefore, he proposed to the national assembly to change the *Caisse d'Es-compte* into a national bank, as a mean of remedying the excessive diminution of the taxes, and the impossibility of procuring one hundred and seventy millions * for the service of 1789 and 1790, he at once exposed the sterility, the absolute nullity of his conceptions. The public justly reproached him with having never displayed in finance any but little views and little resources; they said that, enjoying as he did the confidence of a great nation more fully than any minister had ever enjoyed it, every thing was possible to him; that he had a great effect to produce, an enormous mass to raise; that he could not calculate the power of his levers; that he had only employed in succession fractions of forces, which were quite lost in the attempt; that no part of the honour of the revolution was due to him, as he had neither desired nor foreseen it; that all his successes had been the effect of chance; and that the reputation which he enjoyed was a manifest usurpation. France expected a project of renovation. M. Necker dared not believe it possible to bestow on it so great a benefit.

* £.7,083,333 6 8 sterling.

His eyes were fixed on an establishment, whose prosperity he had been led, by habit, to believe necessarily connected with the prosperity of the state, and whose stock had, for a year, been almost the only resource of an exhausted finance. His plan was severely criticised. What kind of resource, it was said, is that of an insolvent bank which can lend us only our own credit? The national assembly resolved to decree four hundred millions of assignats. M. Necker never knew any practice but the ruinous one of loans.

Amongst this crowd of rapid events which we have had to relate, we have omitted mentioning the venerable and interesting appearance of a peasant of Mont Blanc, aged 120 years, in the national assembly about the end of October, 1789. This man, forgotten by time, was born some years before the most brilliant period of Louis XIV. under which reign he lived forty-six years: he saw himself, on a sudden, presented before the representatives of a people formerly held in contempt, before a sovereign assembly which destroyed, as instruments of servitude, those States General which Louis XIV. had rejected as instruments of liberty. This venerable old man had beheld, under Louis XIV. the
excess

excess of slavery, and the fanaticism of glory; he now contemplated the generous intoxication of liberty, and a glory still more real: he had beheld the most universal and the most profound corruption; and he now contemplated the dawn of a total regeneration: he had beheld the excess of a most servile obedience; and he now contemplated the excesses of a most terrible anarchy: he had beheld all that could be done by a monarch of the most elevated mind, and all that could be done by the brilliant prejudice of honour; he now became a witness of all that could be done by a great nation, and of all the prodigies to which the invincible genius of liberty gives birth. As for us who have lived during the last seven years, we have lived more in that period, that is, we have beheld more great events than this decrepid and venerable old man, for whom Nature seemed to have suspended her laws. The sovereign assembly arose from their seats, in presence of a poor peasant, to pay homage to his age. He had walked to Paris a hundred and two years before, and he perfectly remembered this circumstance. In proportion as his senses decayed, (for he had become blind and deaf,) his distrust and avarice increased. After having seen two generations succeed each other,

other, and become extinct, after having seen a great empire fall in ruins, and on a sudden return to new youth and vigour, this old man died of age. He paid this tribute to Nature two months after he had appeared before the assembly.

The further we proceed in the history of the revolution, the more we become involved in movements and disturbances of every kind. Tumultuous scenes are followed by scenes still more tumultuous. It was in the midst of the assembly itself that the aristocracy excited the greatest agitation. It was not till after the most animated, the most violent discussions, after a thousand vociferations, or rather howlings, after an oration had twenty times been interrupted, renewed, again broken, and again resumed, after the opposing party had exhausted their whole arsenal of sophisms and artifices, of additions and amendments, that the wisest decrees were carried, as it were, by assault. Thus it was with the decree of the 13th of April 1790, which rejected the insidious motion to declare the Catholic religion the religion of the nation, which, in other words, was to declare it the only dominating and consequently persecuting religion : for history informs

us,

us, that every sect which has dominated has also persecuted. This motion, had it been passed, would have been very opposite to the wise and enlightened philosophy of Frederick the Great, who caused this sublime inscription to be placed over the Catholic church at Berlin : *Frederick, who hates not those that serve God differently from himself.* Crowds of orators rushed toward the tribune. We shall cite from these debates, unworthy an age of philosophical illumination, only an argument of M. Destourmels, because it gives us the opportunity of subjoining Mirabeau's answer, one of the noblest bursts of French eloquence. M. Destourmels appealed to his instructions, spoke of the constitutions of Cambresis, and of the oath taken by Louis XIV. never to suffer this province to receive any other religion, except the Catholic Apostolic and Roman religion. M. de Mirabeau darted into the tribune. "I shall observe to the previous speaker," said he, "that neither you nor I can be surprised at such an oath from Louis XIV. In a reign so celebrated by the revocation of the edict of Nantes, we may easily find striking monuments of intolerance and persecution. But since we are permitted to make citations from history, I beseech you not to forget, that from hence, from this

“tribune, you may perceive the window from
“whence the hand of a French monarch,
“armed against his subjects by factious mis-
“creants, who covered their personal interests
“with the sacred interest of religion, fired the
“arquebuses, which served as a signal for the
“massacre of Saint Bartholomew. I demand
“that we pass to the question.”

The question! The question! cried a great part of the assembly. Demands, refusals, attacks, and replies flew about on all sides, like arrows shot amongst a crowd; but the force of reason prevailed.

The assembly next occupied itself with the finances. It was necessary to take measures for attacking at once all the pernicious abuses; it was necessary to rise to the most elevated conceptions. In order to attain this end the assembly, as we have before observed, decreed four hundred millions of assignats*. No one can, with reason, compare them to the paper money which has been so justly proscribed by all political writers, since the assignats bore a cer-

* The creation of assignats was not a measure of a new invention; but it was as great as the circumstances which demanded it, and which it alone could answer.

tain security. The circumstances of a war with all Europe, and still more, perhaps, the dilapidation of the public property, occasioned so prodigious an emission of this paper as led to its depreciation: but notwithstanding its abuse, this measure was, without doubt, the salvation of the republic.

In developing the causes of the enormous *deficit*, which was the chief obstacle that the assembly had experienced in their vast career, new enormities were every day disclosed. It was discovered that there existed a particular register of the depredations of the court, under the title of *The Red Book*, which the assembly resolved to procure. Their request was at first in vain. This book contained the profusions of Louis XV.: and the king, out of respect to the memory of his grandfather, was unwilling to lift the veil which covered part of the vices of his reign. He yielded, however, and agreed to shew it to the commissioners of the committee of pensions, but with the proviso that their investigation should not go beyond his own reign. The first communication was made at the house of M. Necker, in presence of M. de Montmorin. The minister of the finances reminded them of the king's request, that no notice should be taken
of

of his grandfather's secret expences: the members of the committee, faithful to the principles of the national assembly, abstained from investigating them, and began their perusal of this register at the first article of the existing reign. This famous book was a register of expences, consisting of one hundred and twenty-two leaves, bound in red morocco: the paper was of Dutch manufacture, of the fine sort, fabricated by D. and C. Blaauw, and the device marked on it is *pro patriâ et libertate*. Each article is inserted in the hand-writing of the controller-general, and commonly countersigned in the king's hand with an L and a line under it. Thus this book contains successively the writing of Messrs. Terray, Turgot, de Clugny, Necker, Joli de Fleury, d'Ormesson, de Calonne, de Fourqueux, Lambert, and Necker again. The total of the sums entered in the Red Book, between the 19th of May 1774, and the 16th of August 1789, amounted to two hundred and twenty-seven million nine hundred and eighty-five thousand five hundred and seventeen livres *. In the ministry of M. de Calonne alone, Monsieur received thirteen million eight hundred and twenty-four thousand livres †, and M. de Artois fourteen million five hundred and fifty thousand

* £.9,499,396 10 10 sterling.

† 576,000 0 0

livres ;

livres *; besides which sum the latter prince had, at different times, seven million five hundred thousand † for his debts, independently of a fixed revenue of a million ‡ per annum. This book notices a gift of one million two hundred thousand livres § to M. de Polignac for his services, and another of forty-four livres four sols || to Jean René Hamel, serjeant in the regiment of Flanders, for having, by his valour, occasioned the capture of Duderstall.

Calonne and Necker have both said that the annual pensions and gratifications did not exceed twenty-eight millions ¶ : they, in reality, amounted to seventy millions **. Both these ministers were deceived. The public astonishment was still greater when the book of *decisions* shewed an amount of eight hundred and sixty millions †† of ordinances of account in the space of eight years. M. Necker found no other resource to fill up the abyfs of public debts, caused by so many depredations, but the formation of

*	£.606,250	0	0	sterling.
†	312,500	0	0	
‡	41,666	13	4	
§	50,000	0	0	
	1	17	10	
¶	1,166,666	13	4	
**	2,966,666	13	4	
††	35,896,666	13	4	

a trea-

a treasury-office, which, under the direction of the king, should fix the daily expences, should superintend the receipts, and finally, should have the whole management of the public treasure. He wished the majority of the commissioners to be taken from the assembly itself. But the whole plan was far from being sufficient, and was in consequence rejected. It was a great error in M. Necker not to have himself proposed, or at least supported with all his power the only measure which could save the state, I mean the emission of assignats. We agree with M. Necker in thinking that morality ought to be the basis of politics; but there are circumstances of so imperious a nature as to demand, that every thing should be hazarded to save the state. M. Necker, perhaps, foresaw the immense emission which afterwards took place; but this fear (which moreover might not have been realised) should not have prevented him from adopting a measure which remedied, at least for a time, the most pressing necessities of the state. He ought, in a word, to have given this measure his whole support, or to have proposed a better. We acknowledge that he was placed in a very difficult situation, but it is in such situations that genius exhibits the whole of its powers.

BOOK XIX.

Communications of the Brabanters with the Representatives of the French Nation.—Re-union of Corsica and Avignon to the French Empire.—Colonial Affairs.—Troubles of Nancy.—Heroic Patriotism of the young Desfilles.—Honours paid by the National Assembly to the Memory of Franklin.—Mirabeau's Oration on this Occasion.—Character of Marat.—Troubles at Lyons.—Decree in favour of the Non-Catholics who had emigrated at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes.—Decree in favour of the Jews.—Right of making War and Peace.—Rise of Fanaticism at Toulouse.—Its Rage and its Crimes at Montauban, and in the City of Nismes.—Conspiracy of M. de Maillebois.

THE States of Flanders and Brabant had just broken the bonds which attached them to the dominion of the emperor, and had declared their independence. An envoy from Vander-noot brought to the national assembly and to the king the manifesto of this newly-established power. The legislative body, far from indulging in an imprudent enthusiasm, postponed the opening of the packet and the decision upon the subject. It was at this epoch that the island of Corsica, by

the wish of the inhabitants, was declared an integral part of the French empire. The Comtat and Avignon were also united to France. The colonies which are attached to this empire by the most precious bonds, and which contribute so much to its prosperity, were objects far more interesting. The sugar islands feared that the assembly, which had proclaimed the rights of man and destroyed every kind of servitude in France, would abolish two of the cruellest outrages against humanity, the exportation and the slavery of the negroes. The United States had already shewn this great example. The trade of the colonies was indebted to that of France above two hundred millions; it threatened to become bankrupt, unless it was fully confirmed in its pretended property of those *living machines*. At Martinico the administrators had been obliged to convoke the colonial assembly before its time, and without waiting for the king's order. Several regulations were adopted by it for the internal regulation of the island. Saint Domingo presented a still more terrible picture. This colony was divided into three provinces, those of the north, the south, and the west, united, however, under a single governor, and a single commissioner.

On the 27th of September the minister of Marine addressed to the governor, M. de Peynier, and to the commissioner, M. Marbois, an ordinance, to convoke the inhabitants, in order to form an assembly for the nomination of deputies; and for the transmission of information respecting the state and interests of the colonies, to the king and the legislative body. These letters of convocation arrived too late; three permanent committees had been already formed in the three districts of Saint Domingo. The assemblies of the south and west kept up a good understanding with the administration, and with the mother country; that of the north, which was held at the Cape, manifested a different inclination: it declared that all the powers of the inhabitants resided in itself, it continued the agents of the executive power provisionally in their functions, and, nevertheless, it intercepted the ministerial letters. It went further: it imprisoned Dubois, the deputy procurator-general, for having said that the slavery of the negroes was contrary to the principles of the national liberty. The pride of the whites had always established a line of demarcation between them and the men of colour, which name was given to men of all shades from white to black, and

and who composed the greater part of the free inhabitants of the island. Sons, or grandsons of Europeans, rich proprietors, in fine, citizens, they were, nevertheless, excluded from a participation of the social rights. At the beginning of a revolution which attacked every kind of prejudice, they hoped that the prejudice which caused their degradation would disappear. They demanded of the whites, their relations and brothers, to be admitted to the general assemblies. The latter, irritated at these proceedings, which they termed insolent, arrested the deputies. They even dared to cause the king's solicitor, M. Ferrand de la Baudière, to lose his head on a scaffold, for composing the memorial of the deputies. The trial, or rather the mockery of a trial, lasted an hour. During the night of the 26th of November, the whites of the committee of Aquin, divided into three bands, on a sudden attacked the dwellings of the men of colour, and committed the most outrageous excesses. All the patriots in France shuddered at such enormities; but the outcries of the colonists, and the alarm of the merchants, stifled the voice of humanity.

We do not hesitate to assert, that it would have been more conducive, not only to the interests of France, but to those of the colonies;

and even to the ensuring the liberty of the men of colour and the blacks, to have deferred the propagation of the revolution in the islands until after it had been firmly established in France; this wise measure alone would have counteracted the views of Pitt and of the English government. As a proof of our assertions we may observe, that the Abbé Maury proposed to enter at once upon the question of the slave-trade. His wish was evidently to alienate the whole of our commerce, and to induce the colonists to throw themselves into the arms of the English.

It was on the 8th of March that M. Barnave, in the name of the colonial committee, presented that celebrated report which was considered as a model of political wisdom, and adopted, in spite of the remonstrances of Mirabeau and Cazalès, by an almost unanimous decision. By this decree the assembly declared, that it had never meant to comprehend the colonies in the constitution which it had decreed for the kingdom, nor to subject them to laws which might be incompatible with their local peculiarities. Each colony was authorised to declare its opinion on the forms of constitution, legislation, and administration best suited to it. It would have been

been still more prudent to have prejudged nothing ; but to have temporised, like the British parliament, which has been so many years without making any definitive decree relative to the exportation of the negroes. This decree, moreover, presented too many advantages to the colonists ; since it was evident, on the one hand, that they would be tempted to commit still greater abuses, and on the other, that the revolutionary torrent would quickly overspread these countries ; that the colonists would be rendered more harsh and haughty by a decree which they thought irrevocable, and that the men of colour, reduced to humiliation and despair, would seize on the first moment which should appear favourable for insurrection. They should at least have been declared free men and citizens. This act of justice could not, at that time, have offended the planters : it would even have been useful to the whites themselves, whose property it would have rendered more secure. Such was the true source of those troubles and misfortunes which have since afflicted our colonies.

The most distressing intelligence was soon received from these islands. The revolted negroes

groes committed the most shocking barbarities. The body of a white infant, fixed on the point of a pike, served as the standard around which they rallied : and they tortured and cut to pieces a great number of planters ; the Spaniards meanwhile seeming to favour them under-hand. The fatal decree of the 25th of September served still more to aggravate these disasters. A treaty had been formed between the whites and the men of colour, which recompensed the latter for the unjust pride of the colonists, and the false policy of the national assembly : the arrival of this second decree renewed the absurd pretensions of the whites, and obliged the others to recur to force for the support of those rights which nature had given them, and which the decree of the 15th of August had sanctioned. We shall have occasion to recur, in the sequel of this history, to the interesting subject of the colonies, and to develop the consequences of the revolution in that part of the globe. We shall see that the barrier of the ocean has not been sufficient to defend those countries from a repercussion of the shocks which have so long agitated France.

Whilst a whole host of conspirators, both chiefs and subalterns, laboured to excite discord ;
whilst

whilst from the bosom of the convention itself issued the sparks of that flame which overspread the colonies ; the general agitation and the spirit of insurrection communicated themselves to the naval and military forces. Violent commotions took place at Toulon, Brest, and Nancy : there existed a continual action and reaction of the officers against the soldiers, and of the soldiers against the officers, the one party wishing to crush the spirit of rising liberty ; the other, eager to pass beyond the bounds of that very liberty ; for the generality of the officers were decided royalists, and the soldiers were mostly patriots without reflection, who confounded liberty with licentiousness. All the bonds of subordination were broken, and a general principle of dissolution pervaded the army, and formed one of the greatest dangers to which the state has ever been exposed. M. de Mirabeau proposed an expedient, the boldness of which alarmed all parties, but which alone could have saved France : it was to disband the army, and to reorganize it on the principles of the new laws. This proposition was not followed. The embodying the troops of the line with the national guards was carried into effect at a subsequent period ;

period; and to it is owing the public salvation.

The blood which was shed at Nancy was owing to M. de Bouillé, who has since displayed so audaciously his counter-revolutionary intentions. He would not employ those means of conciliation which were in his power: but fought only to arm the troops of the line against the national guards, and one body of the national guards against another. As it is not our plan to detail all these local and partial troubles, we shall speak of the unfortunate events at Nancy only to notice the sublime example of self-devoting patriotism afforded by a young officer named Desfile. M. de Bouillé had given orders to his troops to enter Nancy by force, if any opposition should be made to their passage: the soldiers in Nancy were summoned to surrender; but they, supported by the whole body of the people in arms, answered only by cries of fury, and prepared to discharge a cannon, loaded with grape shot, on the assailants. Instantly a young hero darted from the crowd, and pressing his breast against the mouth of the cannon, exclaimed, "These are your friends: they are your brothers: they are sent by the national assembly. Will you

“ you dishonour yourselves by shedding their blood ?” They endeavoured, in vain, to restrain him ; he threw himself between the rebels and the advanced guard of Bouillé’s troops : he was struck with four musket shots ; and this martyr of humanity fell covered with wounds and with glory.

Let us turn our view from these lamentable events, and hasten to record a decree which does honour at once to the national assembly, and to the memory of a great man, without whom the American revolution, and perhaps our own, would probably not have taken place, or would have been effected at a much later period, and in a very different manner. Franklin was just dead : men of learning lamented him as one of the brightest luminaries of his age ; the human race regretted him as one of the liberators of the world ; the national assembly beheld in him a friend of the French nation, and one of the founders of the constitution. The United States eagerly rendered homage to his memory : the Congress went into mourning for him, an honour which they had as yet paid to no citizen ; but which was justly bestowed on a man whose whole life had been one continued magistracy, consecrated to the happiness and improvement

ment of humanity. "Sirs," said Mirabeau, in the tribune, "Franklin is dead. That genius which liberated America, and diffused torrents of light over Europe, has returned to the bosom of the Divinity. The sage, to whom two hemispheres lay claim; the man, for whom the history of empires and the history of science alike contend, could not but hold an elevated rank among the human race. Long enough have political cabinets notified the deaths of those who were only great in their funeral eulogies; long enough has the etiquette of courts proclaimed hypocritical badges of mourning: Nations ought to mourn only for their benefactors; the representatives of nations ought to recommend to their homage only the heroes of humanity. The Congress has ordered throughout the fourteen States of the Confederacy a mourning of two months for the death of Franklin. Would it not be a worthy task in us to join in this religious act, to participate in an homage thus paid, in the presence of the universe, both to the rights of man, and to the philosopher who has most contributed to extend their dominion over the face of the earth? The nations of antiquity would have raised altars to the pow-

“erful genius who, embracing heaven and
“earth in his exertions for human happiness,
“was able to subdue the force of thunder and
“of tyrants. Europe, free and enlightened,
“owes at least a testimony of remembrance and
“of regret to one of the greatest men that ever
“served philosophy and liberty. I move that
“it be decreed, that the national assembly wear
“three days mourning for Benjamin Franklin.”
This decree was unanimously adopted.

In the history of great revolutions, in that political convulsion which agitates a vast empire, which shakes it to the very foundation, and which stirs up all the waves of rival passions, the historian wades incessantly through blood, and has nothing but tempests, sufferings, and crimes to delineate. The massacres which took place at Avignon, at Nancy, and in a number of other cities, were but the mournful prelude of those which have been since committed, and of that series of bloody scenes which have sullied the immortal pages of our revolution. Incendiary and anarchical writers, paid and powerfully supported either by the party of d'Orleans, or by the aristocracy itself, openly preached the doctrines of carnage. At the head of these teachers of murder, these professors of cannibalism, we may

may place Marat, who was no less sanguinary in his writings than Jourdan was at Avignon; Marat, who called for the sacrifice of two hundred thousand heads, and who was a long while taken for an honest madman, a visionary enthusiast; but who, on the contrary, had all the art of a most consummate villain. Nature had formed him for crime, as she formed Cato for virtue. Marat was born in a little *commune* near Neuchâtel in Switzerland. He assumed in his Journal the title of *the Friend of the People*; and the people had not a more cruel enemy. After he had long dipped his pen in blood, he stained his hands with it on the ever execrable days of the 2d and 3d of September.

On the other hand, fanaticism continued to sharpen its daggers with still greater ferocity, especially in the south of France. The national assembly advanced but slowly, and amidst innumerable obstacles in its long and difficult career. It had established juries in criminal matters; it had appointed judges, and made the principal regulations for the tribunals of police and of commerce. Justice, that first debt of governments, ceased to be sold; and the admirable institution of *justices of the peace* effectually subdued the devouring hydra of chicane. But
whilst

whilst the national representatives elevated with so much labour the majestic edifice of the constitution, the troubles of the interior impeded every moment their progress. It was necessary also to take measures of defence against the attacks from without. Such was the situation of circumstances when this question in the constitution was proposed for discussion. "Should the nation delegate the right of making war and peace, to the legislative assembly or to the executive power?" M. de Mirabeau maintained, with the most powerful logic, and the most animated eloquence, that this power ought to be delegated concurrently to the legislative body, and to the executive. M. Chapelier proposed several amendments, to which Mirabeau agreed; and it was decided that war could only be declared by a decree of the legislative body, on the formal and necessary proposition of the king, and with his subsequent sanction. The popular party, or that which assumed this appellation, became inflamed against Mirabeau, and a libel was dispersed in the streets, intitled, *The Great Treason of the Count de Mirabeau*. Messrs. Barnave and Lameth, who had combated his opinion, upon leaving the assembly, were carried in triumph. It was on this occasion that Mirabeau said in the tribune: "Two days ago,
" I could

" I could myself have been carried in triumph ;
" but I knew, before that period, how short the
" distance is from the Capitol to the Tarpeian
" Rock." We may apply to this ephemeral
triumph of Barnave and Lameth the observation
of Phocion the Athenian. Finding himself ap-
plauded by the multitude, he interrupted his
harangue and went away, saying, " has any blun-
" der then escaped me ?"

Before we return to the troubles which agi-
tated the interior of the kingdom, we ought here
to notice two decrees which do honour to the
national assembly. By the first, it repaired, as
far as was in its power, the errors of the age of
Louis XIV., by restoring to the Non-Catholics
the estates of their ancestors, who had emigrated
on the revocation of the edict of Nantes : by the
other decree it abolished the oppressive and
impolitic taxes for habitation, protection, and
tolerance heretofore paid by the Jews.

But if the assembly, by these philosophic de-
crees, propogated more and more the light of
reason and the first laws of nature, the enemies
of the common weal did but augment their
efforts to impede its operations. Their most ter-
rible weapon was fanaticism. Their attempts
were

were more particularly exerted in the southern parts of France ; because they expected a more violent explosion in a warm climate where the passions are so inflammable, and where the fluid, which circulates in men's veins, resembles saltpetre rather than blood. We seem to be transported to the fourteenth century, when we recollect all the blood which has been shed in the name of the God of peace, and of the religion of universal love and charity, at Montauban, at Nîmes, and throughout almost the whole of Languedoc.

It was at this period that the conspiracy of M. de Maillebois was discovered. Information was given of it by the General's own secretary, M. Maffot de Grandmaison. M. de Maillebois was in the confidence of the princes, and M. d'Artois had proposed him to the king, as commander at the blockade of Paris ; but the choice had been already fixed on M. de Broglio. M. de Maillebois, no less contemptible on account of his avarice and ambition, to which he was ready to sacrifice every thing, than he was renowned for his military talents, thought this a favourable opportunity to efface, by a crime, the dishonour of betraying France, with which he had formerly stained his laurels. From his personal

sonal enmity to M. de Broglio he reckoned also as something the pleasure of humiliating, by the success which he promised himself, a rival who had failed in a similar enterprise. He said publicly, that if he had been chosen as commander of the expedition against Paris, he would not have given the Parisians time to collect their forces and to conquer the Bastille. His secretary, struck with terror at the enormity of this conspiracy and its consequences, set off secretly from the castle of Thury on the 20th of March. This intelligence was a thunder-stroke to M. de Maillebois, who cried with a mournful voice, and in the tone of the deepest despair, "Maffot! the cruel man! he has betrayed me."

The plan of M. de Maillebois had not yet been accepted, because the state of circumstances seemed not yet favourable. Its principal features were to march toward Lyons with one army, to penetrate into France, by way of Brabant, with another, and to advance with a third by Lorraine. The three bodies were to advance to Corbeil, Senlis, and Meaux, in order to blockade Paris. It would have been previously attempted to gain, by the arts and bribes of skilful intriguers, the troops of the frontiers, or at least a great part of their officers.

BOOK XX.

Civil Constitution of the Clergy.—Preparations of the Federation of the 14th of July.—Return of M. d'Orleans.—Federation of the 14th of July. Letter of an eye-witness of this Festival.—Camp of Jales.—Foreign Powers solicited to form a Coalition against France.—Picture of Europe at this Period.—Necker's Resignation.—The principal Clubs.—Impolitic Decree, obliging the Priests to swear that they would maintain the new Organization of the Clergy.—Lamentable Consequences of this Measure.—Origin of the War in La Vendée.—Day of the Daggers.—The King's Journey to St. Cloud.—His Offers to Mirabeau.—Death of that celebrated Orator.—Honours decreed to him.—Report, in consequence of which he was afterwards removed from the Pantheon.—Homage paid to the Memory of Jean Jaques Rousseau.—Apotheosis of Voltaire.

ALL great assemblies have, like the sun, their apogee; and as soon as they have reached the summit of their elevation, they quickly hasten

to their decline*. We shall presently behold the constituent body accumulating the most destructive errors, and proving this mournful truth, that numerous bodies commit the greatest follies. One of these errors was the carelessness with which they adopted the laws which were proposed to them under the name of the civil constitution of the clergy. After having escaped the snare which was laid for them, by the proposal that they should decree a predominant religion, they suffered themselves to be swayed by the influence of one of their committees, which was itself misled by a zeal for the opinions formerly distinguished by the title of Jansenism. The law of the 13th of April, one of the noblest laws enacted by any nation, and the first which was solemnly proclaimed, seemed, by establishing the liberty of worship, to require that all which could by any means concern the religious opinions of any citizen should be left entirely to his conscience. But after having declared that there existed no predominant religion in the state, the assembly wished to organize one of those which

* The national convention has since presented a glorious exception to this observation. The reason was, that it had been plunged in misfortune: the decemviral oppression restored to it its energy.

existed

existed in the state: this was giving to a particular sect a privileged existence. Thus it was the constituent body, whose error kindled that torch of discord which wasted La Vendée, which involved a great part of France in flames, and which was extinguished only by a length of time, and torrents of blood: it was, as the Abbé Maury expressed himself, lighting a match upon a barrel of gunpowder.

But whilst we attack this law as impolitic, it would be unjust to censure the assembly as if it had exceeded its powers, or at all invaded the province of religion: it had certainly a right to regulate the diocesan demarcations. Such a law, however, could not but appear monstrous to an insolent clergy, enriched with gold and plunder, and enervated with luxurious effeminacy, to those consecrated Sybarites, those mitred Satraps, whom it recalled to the pure maxims of the gospel, and whom it regulated, in the eighteenth century, by the severe discipline of the primitive church. We must also confess, that the conduct of the constitutional priests rendered it impossible to seize the noblest opportunity that ever occurred for establishing a pure and popular religion. Most of those priests seemed to justify the contempt in which they

were held by the people whom they confirmed in their former errors, by pursuing a scandalous and often sanguinary conduct, in the persecution of their rivals.

The ever famous epoch of the 14th of July, the anniversary of which was approaching, soon presented one of the most brilliant spectacles recorded in history, or rather was a spectacle unprecedented in the annals of any nation. Already had each department seen the standard of liberty waving over the altar of patriotism. Montelimar and Valence had set the example in the southern provinces; the inhabitants of Anjou and Brittany assembled at Pontivy, presented a no less striking spectacle. The patriotic emulation became general. It inspired the commune of Paris with the grand idea of uniting all these particular federations into one general federation, and of assembling in the capital, before the eyes of the national representatives, the deputies of all the national guards, and of all the troops of the line, in order to confound, in one single and common oath of allegiance, the variety of different oaths which had the same object. The universal and unexpected movement which the general confederation of the French people communicated to the whole kingdom made the return of M. d'Orleans

d'Orleans from London pass unnoticed. He had previously informed the assembly of his intention ; but the effect of this intelligence was absorbed in the powerful interest inspired by the approaching federation.

We shall here transcribe the recital given by an eye-witness of this civic festival, the philosophical author of the *Correspondence of an Inhabitant of Paris with his Friends in Switzerland and England*. He describes all the sensations which he experienced from this striking and majestic ceremony. We have ascertained the accuracy of his narration. The day, says he, which was chosen for the ceremony of the Champ de Mars, was the anniversary of that which, by the capture of the Bastille, had given a hope, had established a possibility, had presented a prospect of such a federation. This day, a day so much desired by the one party, so much dreaded by the other, at length arrived. How shall I give you an idea of the grandest and most striking picture ever presented to the human eye ? The *Champ de Mars*, situated between the military school and the river Seine, was transformed, as if by enchantment, into a circus of a league in circumference, around which the soil

had been elevated, in the space of a fortnight, into several rows of seats and benches, so disposed as to form an amphitheatre. In the middle of the circus was placed an altar of a simple antique and religious form: the spot on which it was situated was a small kind of hill terminated by a lofty pyramid, the sides of which were cut into a numerous flight of steps. An inscription on the altar marked the purpose for which it was erected. At its foot was exhibited a model of the Bastille reversed. A magnificent triumphal arch, with three openings, and decorated with inscriptions, was placed beyond the altar, and served as an entrance to the circus, which was terminated by the front of the military school. Along this front was extended a line of steps descending to the level of the circus; on these steps were erected eight vast galleries, covered and ornamented. In the middle of the galleries was the king's throne; and over it was a balcony destined for the queen and the ministers. An immense multitude of people hastened thither in crowds at day-break. Three hundred thousand spectators of both sexes, and of all ages and conditions, placed themselves, without confusion, on the benches and steps surrounding the circus. The Champ de Mars, environed with a multitude of trees and shrubs, appeared as if
plunged

plunged in a vast ocean of verdure. The armed deputies of the departments of France advanced in good order : they entered the circus by the three openings of the triumphal arch, and arranged themselves in several circular and corresponding lines. They were succeeded first, by the electors of Paris, next by the representatives of the commune, and lastly by the national assembly. All of these numerous bodies took their places in the galleries destined to them. Two thousand musicians were placed on the steps and around the altar. The king had been nominated, for this day alone, as the supreme and absolute commander of the national guards of France. He deputed the Marquis de la Fayette to perform the functions of this command ; he transmitted to him all its powers ; so that the general of the Parisian guard was, at that time, generalissimo of six millions of armed men, whose freedom has been the bulwark of France since the destruction of the Bastille. The banners of the departments, confounded with the sixty standards of the Parisian districts, waved throughout the circus. During the preparations for the ceremony, all the patriotic soldiers, who had arrived, strangers to each other, from the different extremities of France, mixed together, formed a mutual acquaintance, and testified their joy at such an union, by sports and dances, or by the

the exhibition of mock fights. The king, superbly dressed, seated himself upon his throne. He beheld himself surrounded by the authors * of the revolution, the founders of liberty, the fathers of the constitution; and he saw, ranged before him, the armed protectors of the state. Two hundred priests, in white surplices, advanced slowly toward the altar; these priests did not, as formerly, approach the altar with a spirit of consecrated imposture, and with a desire of domination, to sanctify the oppression of the people, and the despotism of tyrants. No! they came to affix the seal of religion to that contract which united the nation to its chief, and both to the constitution. It was on this altar, after a thousand years of war between religion and superstition, that divines came to form an alliance with philosophers, and to utter themselves those accents of liberty which had formerly filled them with affright †. The sacred enthusiasm of liberty transported all these warriors; they ran toward the

* It would be more accurate to say the proclaimers, than the authors of the revolution, which was not owing solely to these men, but proceeded, as we have already shewn, from several previous causes.

† Our philosopher here describes what ought to have been the case, not what really happened. The constitutional priests let slip a favourable opportunity for the annihilation of dogmatism: they were more intolerant and more immoral even than

the altar ; they ascended it in crowds, with drawn swords in their hands ; and swore to obey the new laws, and to enforce their observance. The national assembly, and the king, swore also to maintain the new constitution. Law and liberty, the nation and the king, formed as it were a new chain, which every Frenchman zealously adopted, instead of his ancient bonds. A hundred pieces of cannon announced the solemn oath to the capital and to the empire. The ordnance of the nearest municipalities proclaimed it to the more distant, which, in their turn, by discharges of artillery, spread the news with rapidity to the very extremities of France.

Who that enjoyed this spectacle could regret that he had not assisted at the Olympic games ? I find in it a consolation for not having been born two thousand years ago, for not having be-

than the priests whom they succeeded. How, indeed, should priests be philosophers ? How is it possible to reconcile error with truth, the spirit of philosophy with that of pride, luxury, and dominion ? We must also acknowledge that most of the confederates were royalists ; so much had the aristocracy influenced the choice of the deputies sent to this festival ! If Louis XVI. had possessed any energy of character, he might have put himself at the head of these eighty thousand confederates.

held

held at Rome those immense assemblages of a free people, in the public squares, the circuses, the amphitheatres, celebrating their festivals, or giving laws to the world. Have you been able to collect, from this slight sketch, a feeble idea of this striking spectacle? Let us consider its separate features. A king renouncing absolute power, and recognizing two forces superior to his own, the nation and the law! A people, the first in the universe, by means of its civil, political, and military representatives, taking possession of the sovereignty in the presence of heaven, and rising to the dignity of a free nation, with a pomp and solemnity unparalleled in antiquity! What a day was that which united in its short duration whole centuries, which brought together an innumerable multitude of different characters, all striking, all extraordinary! This day may be regarded as the festival of liberty, the triumph of the law, as an august and solemn compact, a grand confederation, a religious ceremony, a renovation, or rather a revival of the body politic, a reviviscence of the social order, a national congress, an inauguration of representative government ingrafted upon monarchy. What did we behold in the Champ de Mars? The vast sepulchre of despotism, the funeral of

the States General and of the ancient orders, the grave of vanity and grandeur, the cradle of rising anarchy, of too long a continuance, however short may be its existence, a terrible example of the instability of human affairs, a picture the most moral that ever was presented to the reflections and meditations of the philosopher !

If I wrote for the vulgar, I should stop here ; I should fear to spoil my picture, and to weaken the impressions which I had already excited, by associating with them my own sensations ; but, faithful to the plan which I laid down, I have rather painted things as they should have been, than as they really were. I am obliged therefore to deaden, in a great measure, the brilliancy of this magnificent scene. This festival, both in intention and reality, was very superior to any description that I can give ; but, in its relation to myself, I must speak of it very differently. I saw nothing, I heard nothing distinctly : the objects in the circus were too distant and too numerous. An unfortunate circumstance contributed not a little to destroy its effect, and even to introduce much trouble and confusion. The most tempestuous weather, with violent gusts of a cold northerly wind, continued with
short

short intervals, for several hours. Two hundred thousand women, dressed in white, and exposed all to the inclemency of the elements, were in a short time drenched, and frozen with the cold rain; and their waving plumes were beaten down like a lily yielding to the torrent.

The eye embraced too vast a space: the objects of sight were so many, that none were clearly seen. Besides, a spectacle which speaks only to the eye soon becomes insipid: in order to keep alive an interest for nine hours together, there must be a concurrence of the other senses, above all, the mind must be active, the thoughts must be employed. There was neither an harangue delivered, nor music executed: the rain dispersed the musicians. I heard nothing but the tumult of the circus, and the noise of the cannon. Only a few wind instruments and drums were heard around the altar. It is thus, that instead of receiving from a spectacle impressions proportionate to its greatness, the effect may be in an inverse ratio to the immensity: this depends undoubtedly on the weakness of man and the small extent of his resources. In physical, as in moral greatness, all excess is vicious.

The

The languor which I experienced in the Champ de Mars brought to my mind the arts employed by the ancients to correct this inconvenience of seeing and hearing without distinguishing the objects heard and seen, an inconvenience inseparable from the great assemblies which resulted from their republican forms of government. This art is entirely unknown to us. I have little doubt but that it was connected with their musical system, with the elements of which we are equally unacquainted. They combined together the united powers of mechanics and music, and thus established the proportion, before alluded to, between the exhibition and the spectators. They found means, on their vast stages, to exaggerate the height, and to swell out the voice by masks capable of augmenting sound. Then the tragic poet exercised the office of a most important magistrate : he instructed, he electrified, at the same instant, twenty thousand spectators. In their tribunes instruments of sound strengthened the voices of their orators, and extended them to a great distance. They were wonderfully assisted by the nature of their languages, as strong and vocal as our's are dull and monotonous. The Greek language, especially, was the daughter of harmony itself.

Amongst

Amongst the Greeks, a people endowed with the most delicate organs, and the most exquisite sensibility, every thing took a lyric form; every thing was subjected to the influence of music. It gave their language that stamp of harmony which made it, when written, present at once a train of thoughts and a succession of regular sounds. This language was at once spoken and sung. Every syllable had its peculiar tone, which was designated either by a sign, or by its local position. And if the re-echoing mask, as is most probable, yielded to the motions of the mouth and the lips, and to the articulations of the voice, it is easy to conceive that their orators and actors must have been heard at a prodigious distance. To return to the Champ de Mars; we may remark, that though placed in the very centre of discord and faction, the whole passed without any contest or disturbance, although it was not protected by any armed guard.

The idea of celebrating the æra of liberty, by a grand festival, had presented itself too late; that of rendering it more striking by an oath *
of

* Oaths have been too much abused during the revolution: they have been required on every occasion, for every constitution,

of federation still later. Enthusiasm supplied the want of time for preparing a convenient situation. These obstacles even hastened its approach. All the citizens, of whatever age or sex, became labourers, and the work of more than three months was executed in a fortnight. The aristocracy meanwhile was not idle; it sought to take advantage even of the festivals of liberty. The national guards of the departments of l'Ardèche and la Lozère were solicited to form a federal camp, in order to renew together the civic oath taken at the general confederation. They assembled on the 18th of August in the plain of Jalès. Seditious petitions were soon presented to them to sign; it was even demanded that the Catholics of Nîmes should be restored to the full exercise of their rights as French citizens; and by these Catholics were meant those who had signed an

constitution, and for every function. Nothing is a greater proof of fickleness and immorality. The ancients were less lavish, but more observant of oaths. The only oath which ought to be required of a public functionary, should be to execute his functions with fidelity and uprightness: it ought never to be an oath of their opinions. No one has the right of scrutinizing another's conscience, of diving into his thoughts, and extorting their secret inclination. The actions alone, and not the opinions of a public functionary, or of any other citizen, are subject to political restraint.

incendiary manifesto addressed to all the communes in the kingdom. These factious men had been cited to appear at the bar of the national assembly, who had suspended them from the rights of active citizens until they should obey this decree, which they had not done at that period. It was demanded, that their arms should be restored to them, those arms which they had turned against their fellow citizens. The national guards were in number twenty thousand, ranged under seventy standards, and representing more than eighty thousand men. It is evident that the priests were the principal instigators of this plot, the most dangerous, perhaps, of all those which had threatened the public weal. The directory of the department of l'Ardèche hastened to enlighten the citizens by a proclamation, which was a model of wisdom and courage: it produced the desired effect, and this conspiracy failed almost at the moment of conception. Nevertheless the numerous instruments of aristocracy and fanaticism began to trumpet forth wonderful and exaggerated accounts of the events of the camp at Jalès: but their misrepresentations deceived no person. Our intention of clearing this history from the superfluous load of details would have prevented

prevented us from mentioning this circumstance; but it will serve to give an idea of the numerous plots excited by malevolence and fanaticism, which, continually struggling like a viper under the foot which crushes it, present to the eye of the historian nothing but a picture of confusion, of priestcraft, and of blood.

Abroad, all the cabinets of Europe were solicited to form a coalition of forces against France. Germany, intoxicated with this feudal phrenzy, was the head of this coalition. Spain, already unable to support its possessions in the two hemispheres, was willing to exhaust its gold and its soldiers. The King of Sardinia, possessing few resources, and risking few advantages, reckoned upon gaining one of those trifling aggrandisements which have always constituted the policy of that court. Prussia was powerful, and made fair promises, but would not disarm. In England the people, who will perceive too late the interest which they have in forming an alliance with France, gave themselves up to the government of Pitt, whose disorganizing genius, like that of Louis XI. * founded all his hopes in

* The maxim of Louis XI. was *divide & impera*. Genius is attributed to Pitt; but we see little skill in dividing an empire already torn to pieces by factions.

the divisions which he fomented amongst us by means of gold: he hazarded the East Indies; but he wished to seize our colonies. The vain thunders of Rome were also hurled against us. And yet France, without allies, without assistance, without specie, tormented by famine, real or artificial, and torn by its own divisions, France, which Burke had blotted from the map of Europe, resisted all without being even intimidated by so menacing a league, which Russia also seemed inclined to join. France, perhaps, the only nation that has been suddenly, and at the same instant, abandoned by all others. Nothing but the hatred or the fear of the French revolution could have thus united against us so many powers, many of whom had a real interest in defending, rather than in opposing France.

It was already a great error to have formed for the clergy a civil constitution, which at most should have been termed only a regulation; but a still more fatal and impolitic decree was that by which the national assembly wished to connect religion with the civil order, and to oblige all the citizens to embrace the regulations relative to the religious hierarchy. How was it possible that an assembly which had proclaimed the rights of man, and which contained so much talent and knowledge, should

should pass a decree so absurd, intolerant, and dangerous, as that by which it required the priests, besides the oath of maintaining the constitution, which was taken by all the citizens, to swear also to maintain the civil constitution of the clergy? Immediately the priests raised the outcry of violence and persecution. There were indeed amongst them many simple but honest men, who thought their consciences were wounded by this organization of the clergy so improperly called a civil constitution. It is indisputable, and it cannot be too often repeated, that the assembly ought never to have busied itself about priests or religion. This very circumstance made them of importance, and even interesting; it caused a danger of renovating, under one form, a body which it had destroyed under another; it established a new intolerance in the place of the former, and substituted tigers for wolves*. The nonjuring priests called the others intruders, apostates, villains; the latter retorted on them epithets no less violent, they called them the unsworn, or non-sworn, refractory, non-conformists, fanatics, and counter-revolutionists. A feigned zeal for religion on a sudden

* Unfortunately all the constitutional priests were not Gregoires, Villars, Talleyrands, or Thibauts.

became fashionable among the aristocrats or royalists; they attached themselves to the nonjuring priests. A display of religion was universally affected at Worms and Coblenz. Discord divided every city and town, every cottage and family, in France. This violent storm broke out most furiously in the western departments, particularly in that of Morbihan. Then were sown the first seeds of that long and infernal war of La Vendée; the mournful remembrance of which we shall too frequently have occasion to recall.

The king had the imprudence to afford an asylum, in his palace, to the nonjuring priests; and in order to effect his escape from the kingdom, he prepared to go to Saint Cloud, under the pretence of keeping Easter, an act of piety in use among the Catholics. We must here refer to some preceding events. The king's aunts had set off first, and reached Rome. A short time afterwards happened the famous day of the *Poniards*, the recital of which is as follows:

A multitude of aristocrats, nobles, and pretended friends of the king, repaired to the royal palace of the Thuilleries, armed with poniards
of

of a particular construction. They were to have cried, that the king's life was in danger, and to have stabbed any person that opposed his escape. The arrival of one of them, two hours too soon, was the means of discovering the plot. The national guard perceived a poniard under his cloak; he was arrested, searched, and found to be armed with pistols. Two hours afterward, the guards, thus forewarned, observed several suspicious men arrive, whom they searched, and finding on them pistols and poniards, they contented themselves with disarming and driving them away. M. de Bouillé, to whom the king had given the command of Lorraine, (a command which he afterwards abused in the affair of Nancy, as, by anticipating the events, we have already observed,) had prepared a retreat for the king on the frontiers of Luxembourg, a province belonging to the Emperor. Montmédi, a strong town in France, was the place to which the king was to have been conducted, in order to head the nobility, and to become the chief of a party against his people; a more secure retreat was afterwards prepared in a town situated in a foreign country, at the distance of two leagues from the frontier.

The king, always undecided, or perhaps with a view of deceiving the vigilant eye of M. de

Mirabeau, whose union with M. d'Orleans he could not but dread, endeavoured to attach him to himself. He consulted him on the means of giving a different stamp to the constitution. Mirabeau thought that a nation could not enjoy its political rights in their fullest extent, or at least the most valuable of all rights, the security of property and tranquillity, but with a king. He wished the monarchy to be circumscribed by constitutional bounds, in order to preserve it from despotism; but he wished, at the same time, that it should be a safe-guard against the licentious excesses of anarchy. Mirabeau answered the king, that he saw no other means than for him to retire to a part of the kingdom, from whence he might with safety present those modifications which he thought necessary. The king, with some difficulty, adopted, or pretended to adopt, this project. Several sketches of a plan were drawn out preparatory to its execution; but soon afterwards Mirabeau died. We must here observe, that Mirabeau, who received money from d'Orleans, received some also from the king on this occasion, though he was far from believing the possibility or the success of the advice which he gave the monarch. This was one of those circumstances in which both parties mutually attempted to cheat each other.

The

The approaching flight of the king was soon a mystery only to the multitude, who rarely can contemplate at once the future, the present, and the past. Before we come to this event, the celebrity which Mirabeau possessed, induces us to consider for a moment the circumstances of his death. His obsequies were not a common funeral; they were a more splendid triumph than any hero of ancient Rome enjoyed. The treasures of Asia were not lavished on it, nor were captive kings dragged along in chains; but Mirabeau alone formed the whole ornament of this triumph. We behold him on the summit of glory, and placed in the rank of the immortals. His image appears in every eye; his name is heard from every tongue. In the magnificent edifice of Saint Genevieve, in the pantheon, he is about to enjoy divine honours*: he is about to be placed between Voltaire and Rousseau, by the side of Descartes. The whole city of Paris, a countless multitude, the Parisian army, a mil-

* It must not be concluded from this expression, which is somewhat exaggerated, that great men, or men called great, were really deified: they were not invoked, nor was any other act of worship paid to them. We shall, moreover, see, in the sequel of this work, that the honours of the pantheon were lavished as inconsiderately, as oaths, laws, and decrees, many of which were no sooner enacted, than they were repealed.

lion of men, the whole kingdom of France, in the persons of its representatives, attend his funeral.

Let us call to mind Mirabeau in the beginning of his career, escaping from the prisons of France, wandering in Holland without lodging and without bread, hiring himself out to a bookseller, undertaking, in order to gain a subsistence, the translation of a work from a language which he did not understand, procuring a grammar and a dictionary, and learning English as he translated it into French. It is curious to contrast this anecdote of his life with that of his last illness, when he could see and hear from his bed men and women of all ranks and degrees hastening in crowds from all parts to the street where he dwelt, surrounding his house, fixing their eager and inquiring eyes on the windows and walls, stopping and interrogating the physicians. At this period the newsmen cried through the streets of Paris every hour a new account of his disorder; and he was enabled to enjoy a foretaste of immortality, and to judge, from the anxiety, the agitation, and alarm which he inspired, how universally his death would be esteemed a public calamity. Compare this alarm, this consternation, these accents of universal sorrow, with the indifference and the profound silence which accompanied

accompanied the extinction of M. Necker's ephemeral glory. Compare again this silence and this indifference with the triumphant entry of the same Necker into Paris; and then consider the striking honours of Mirabeau's funeral, honours so extraordinary and superhuman, the solemn proclamation of his greatness, the idolatry, the intoxication of the people of Paris, for that Mirabeau, whom the same people had, a few months before, insulted and abused, whilst they were carrying Barnave in triumph; that Mirabeau, who had been menaced with the lamp-post, for having attempted, even with a timid hand, to maintain a balance of powers, and to guard against anarchy, by strengthening the executive, to whom he would have given the right of initiating war and peace, and of concluding them concurrently with the legislative body. After this, pass over an interval of three years, and behold this man, so lately deified, expelled from the pantheon by a decree: then appreciate that chimera which is called fame; then say, whether there is any thing more absurd, or more capricious, than reputation; add to these mournful reflections, that the man, who is celebrated in one corner of Europe, is unknown in China, and in a hundred other countries;

tries; and finally, remember, that, after death, his glory is no longer his own, no longer conduces to his enjoyment.

It is impossible to think of such strange vicissitudes as these, without remembering the observation which escaped Cromwell amidst the acclamations of the people, who hastened to greet his entrance. "They would applaud still more," said he, "if I were going to the scaffold." Such are the populace!—such is their exact description! They are always passive; they are always directed; the public execution of a criminal, or the funeral honours of a great man, interest them alike. They would have wreaked their fury on the bodies of Rousseau and Voltaire, if they had been excited to it; they would have dug them up as the remains of impious wretches unworthy of sepulture; they assisted with transport at their apotheosis. Destiny, chance, fortune, the irresistible tide of circumstances; these govern human events, and regulate their success.

It would be easy to shew that the *veto*, the right of making war and peace, and the laws respecting emigrants and public functionaries, were contradictory to Mirabeau's principles. May we not reasonably conclude, that he did not believe those

these principles which he publicly professed? May we not conclude, that he only adopted them from a fear of being of no consequence in the revolution, and from a desire of being revenged on the nobility? That, drawn along by the party to which he had devoted himself, he had neither the power nor the boldness sooner to manifest his true sentiments in favour of royalty with constitutional restrictions, and to support this system with all the powers of his genius? That he was on the eve of bringing them forward, at the moment when he was arrested by death; and that this his intention was proved by the engagement, which he undertook in the tribune of the Jacobin society, to combat the factions of all parties and of all system? And, indeed, there were various reports respecting the cause of his death: some said that the leaders of the Jacobins had caused him to be poisoned, on account of the declaration which he had made of his sentiments: others asserted that the Duke of Orleans had contrived these means of getting rid of him as soon as he learnt that he had sold himself to the king. This latter opinion appears to us to be the most probable.

We shall here relate the particulars of his death. Mirabeau had undermined his robust constitu-

constitution, by an abuse of its powers, a neglect of regimen, continued study, and impetuous passions. He neglected the repeated advice of his physician, and if he was not poisoned, which there is every reason to believe, his death must be attributed to the above-mentioned causes. His disorder broke out on a sudden. Paris no sooner learnt that he was ill, than that he was dying. In his long and painful agony, he displayed the same animated character which had distinguished him in all the diversities of his adventurous life. At one moment he let fall a stroke of original humour, and seemed to sport with death in the midst of convulsions so painful, as scarcely to leave a doubt of his having been poisoned; at another moment, he indulged in sentiments of tenderness with his friends; at times he declaimed against his adversaries. A sort of palsy had struck one-half of his body: the extremities were cold; and all the external symptoms of mortification appeared. He heard the sentence of death with firmness. He preserved his reason till the last moment; he attended on his death-bed, to the debates of the national assembly; and employed himself on the plan of a law relative to inheritances. "It will be singular," said he, "to hear a work on testamentary succession made by a man who has but the evening before
" dictated

"dictated his own will." His tongue being affected, he took a pen and wrote a request to his physician to procure him some opium. A few moments afterwards, regaining the use of his speech, he delivered a discourse conceived with energy and full of great ideas; but being interrupted, on a sudden, by an acute spasm, he uttered a cry, and expired on the 2d of April 1791, at ten o'clock in the morning.

Mirabeau was a zealous partizan of monarchy. He said to his friends that royalty would, perhaps, survive the revolution, but that the reigning dynasty would not survive it. It may here be asked, why Mirabeau, who was well acquainted with the constitutions of England and America, did not vote for one of those constitutions with suitable modifications? It may be asked, how he could reconcile liberty with hereditary royalty? We answer to these two questions, that he would, perhaps, have supported the system of a patrician order and an upper house, if he had possessed sufficient greatness of mind to sacrifice his hatred of the nobility; and if he did not endeavour to introduce amongst us the American constitution, it was undoubtedly from a belief that it could not be adapted to a people of corrupt manners, and of a volatile and impetuous

impetuous character. He did not consider that government moulds, at will, the national character; that the French, who are in the present day so thoughtless, were, in the time of Julian, a grave and serious people; and that the Italians bear no resemblance to the ancient Romans, though they are the same people, living in the same climate, and have only changed their government. Let us rather conclude, that Mirabeau aimed only at becoming prime minister under d'Orleans; and that after he had sold himself, as we have seen, to the king, he limited his ambition to the aggrandisement of his fortune. He had, indeed, sold himself to the court long before, and he turned to the Duke d'Orleans, because M. Necker broke his word to him. Irrefragable proofs of these facts are to be found in the report made to the convention on the 5th Frimaire of the 2d year of the republic (25th November 1793) by Chenier, in the name of the committee of public instruction. The following is an extract from this report, in consequence of which Mirabeau was expelled from the Pantheon; but it was to place there, whom? Good God! It was to place there Marat! and that in the name of a committee of *public instruction*.

“ I come

“ I come,” said Chenier, “ in the name of
“ your committee of public instruction, to fulfil a
“ rigorous duty. I come to speak of Mirabeau.
“ You know how unanimous an homage was
“ paid to his memory. At his death he ob-
“ tained triumphal honours. At that moment
“ every one remembered not his antipopular
“ opinions on the royal sanction, on the right
“ of war and peace, and on other questions of
“ equal importance ; but the truly civic motions
“ which his manly eloquence supported, and the
“ striking words which he addressed to the slave
“ Brézé. His memory would be this day un-
“ spotted, his glory unimpeachable, if, previ-
“ ously corrupted by luxury, and seduced by
“ ambition, he had not conceived the senseless
“ project of being at once the man of the
“ court, and the man of the people. Was he
“ ignorant that kings have sufficiently revenged
“ themselves on popular orators, when they
“ have had the shameful satisfaction of corrupt-
“ ing them. It is not from vague rumours,
“ from such testimonies as it would be easy to
“ accumulate, that you will judge Mirabeau ;
“ but from writings, whose authenticity cannot
“ be disputed, and whose authority you will
“ yourselves estimate. They are contained in

“ the collection of justificatory papers, attached
 “ to the act of accusation against Louis Capet.
 “ The paper, No. 7, is dated the 2d of March
 “ 1791, addressed to the tyrant, and signed La-
 “ porte, who was inspector of the civil list.
 “ The following are its contents. ‘ Sire, when
 ‘ I informed your majesty this morning of the
 ‘ conversation which I had yesterday with M.
 ‘ de Luchet, I did not think that I should have
 ‘ had so soon to inform you of what I concluded
 ‘ to be the real subject of that visit. I transmit
 ‘ to you, Sire, the communication which I re-
 ‘ ceived at two o’clock. *The terms are very clear;*
 ‘ M. de Mirabeau requires a fixed income for
 ‘ the future, either in annuities charged upon the
 ‘ public revenue, or in permanent estates. What
 ‘ assurance of his conduct can I demand of him ?
 ‘ What can I promise him at present ? or what
 ‘ expectation can I give him for the future * ?
 ‘ M. de Mirabeau has already been deceived : I
 ‘ know that he said, a year ago, that *M. Necker*
 ‘ *had twice broken his word to him* †. I

* M. de Mirabeau ought to have known, that kings al-
 ways punish those whom they have corrupted, as soon as
 their services become unnecessary.

† This circumstance marks with infamy both Necker and
 Mirabeau, the corrupter and the person corrupted.

“ shall

" shall conclude these disgusting extracts with a
 " few lines from the paper, No. 4, dated April
 " 20, 1791, in which Laporte, speaking of a
 " faction then beginning to appear, says, ' They
 " know that your majesty has distributed money
 " to Mirabeau, and some others, whose names I
 " have heard mentioned.' This is more than suffi-
 " cient to determine the judgment of the national
 " convention. It is vain to object, that there exists
 " not a line, among all these papers, in Mira-
 " beau's hand-writing; if we weigh the circum-
 " stances, if we consider the disposition both of
 " the writers, and of those to whom the writings
 " were addressed, and the mutual interest which
 " they had in keeping a profound silence on
 " these mysterious points, we may reasonably
 " assert, that no jury exists which would not
 " unanimously declare, that Mirabeau sold him-
 " self to the court. The following is the plan
 " of a decree which your Committee proposes
 " to you :

" Article 1st, The national convention, con-
 " sidering that no man is great without virtue,
 " decrees, that the body of Honoré Gabriel
 " Riquetti Mirabeau shall be withdrawn from
 " the Pantheon :

“ Article 2d, On the same day that the body
“ of Mirabeau is withdrawn from the Pantheon,
“ that of Marat shall be transferred thither.”
This decree was unanimously adopted.

This report teaches us to judge of men and of numerous assemblies. Not a voice was raised to prevent the apotheosis, the *Pantheonisation* of Marat. And Chenier, who proposed it, is one of those who, changing his opinions with the change of circumstances, has since declaimed most violently against Marat and his followers.

It remains for us to describe the personal appearance of Mirabeau. From a neck, which was sunk between a large pair of shoulders, arose a head of an enormous size: the rest of his form was a thick and shapeless mass. His forehead almost always covered with wrinkles, eyebrows thick and lowering, his looks inspiring terror, altogether marked the hideousness of his soul. He was a bad son, a bad husband, a bad citizen. His physiognomy would have justified the opinion of those who think the features of the countenance a sufficient index to the character of the mind; but that we often see monsters of ferocity, whose features are expressive of nothing but mildness. Couthon had an open
smiling

smiling countenance ; but he was the most cruel and perfidious of men. The extravagance and irregularity of Mirabeau's private life were much more certain presages of immorality in his political career. He passed a great part of his youth in places of confinement. This gave occasion to a remark of Madame de Mirabeau, his mother, who said to him one day, in our presence, at a breakfast at which the amiable and lively Chevalier de Boufflers was also present : “ My son, you have passed a great part of your “ days in the shade ; and it is that which has so “ much contracted your views.” These ingenious words were a very remarkable kind of prophecy of the lamentable end of a man whose fame was more extensive than solid, who possessed only part of Cicero's powers of eloquence, and who was far from imitating his morality. Indeed it evinced a great want of foresight to depend on promises which the court would not long have kept, and to imagine that he could at once serve, or with impunity deceive, the people, the king, and the Duke d'Orleans.

The proceedings at the Chatelet, which we have before mentioned, had been to Mirabeau the head of Medusa : they filled him with despair, vexation, and a gloomy chagrin, which visibly

undermined his health. "I will pursue the judges of that tribunal to the grave," said he, one day, in the national assembly. "And I declare, in their name," cried a deputy, "that they will pursue you to the gallows." This striking retort rankled like a poisoned arrow in his heart, and was, perhaps, one of the causes of his death. Notwithstanding all his circumspection, it was soon perceived that he had abandoned both the Jacobins and d'Orleans. He knew not what path to pursue. After much hesitation he secretly sold himself to the royalists. The Ministers were foolish enough to buy him when, by having lost his popularity, he had become incapable of serving them: he was then, as the author of the *Conjuration d'Orleans* well observes, a viper without his sting. Mirabeau, like all those of his class, sold himself, but did not stand to his bargain. He terminated his career in a few months, and, as we have seen, in a very lamentable manner. D'Orleans saw every day more plainly, that instead of approaching the throne, he was only hastening toward the scaffold, on which he soon expiated his crimes. His agents, even the leaders of the Cordeliers, were sacrificed, in their turn, by the Jacobins, and these latter by the Thermidorean reaction. Striking lessons, which, however, will correct neither factions

factions nor men of ambition ; because crime, and, above all, ambition, is ever blind!

The legislative body had decreed a statue to the author of *Emilius* ; a man, perhaps, still more astonishing, since his powers were truly universal ; since he possessed all the stores of genius and learning ; and since, in every pursuit opening to himself a new path, he gained in all the first rank, undoubtedly deserved to attract the attention of the national assembly. They hastened, therefore, to decree to Voltaire a place in the Pantheon, by the side of Descartes, who had produced so great a revolution in the human mind. They would have ordered the ashes of J. J. Rousseau to be transported thither, but from a fear of afflicting the person who had collected and preserved them. We shall see, in the sequel of this history, that the convention surmounted a scruple, in itself commendable, and caused the sacred remains of this great man to be carried to the Pantheon,

B O O K XXI.

Flight of Louis XVI.—Particulars respecting that Event.—Striking and majestic Calm of the French Nation, and its Representatives.—The King is stopped at Varennes, and brought back to the Capital.—Conferences at the Castle of Pilnitz.—Coalition of Foreign Powers.—Interrogatory of Louis after his Return from Varennes.—Affair of the Champ de Mars.—Division of the Society of the Friends of the Constitution.—Name which the Jacobins at that Time assumed.—Revision of the Constitutional Act.—It is accepted by the King.—Reflections on the Constituent Assembly and its Operations.

WE have seen in the preceding book the arrangements which M. de Bouillé made to favour the flight of the king. On the monarch's return to Saint Cloud, he continued to dissemble more than ever. On the 20th of June, a carriage with two horses was placed in the Princes Court at eleven o'clock, and a chaise belonging to the Count de Fersen (who, as the papers of that time said, was very much in the queen's
good

good graces, and was one of the principal agents in the business) was posted at the end of the Pont Royal on the quay of Voltaire. During these preparations the queen wrote thus to Madame d'Offun, one of her ladies in waiting: " I wish much to see you out of this place : I " have many things to communicate to you ; " but our hasty departure does not leave me a " moment. Fly from this city."

At the first rumour of this flight, Paris shewed the same courage, which it had displayed two years before in taking the Bastille. Instead of the consternation and rage in which our enemies expected to see us plunged, Paris, and the whole of France, remained in a striking and majestic calm. The king, and the crowned viper who had infused into him her own rage, thought that in parting they had bequeathed to us a civil war, and that fire and sword would be spread on all sides ; but all was tranquil. The pictures of the king and queen disappeared from every sign, their names were every where effaced, and, in an instant, the word national was substituted for royal. In that very day two houses, the property of the nation, were sold at double their estimated value. This was imitating the illustrious

ous example of two Roman citizens, one of whom set to sale, and the other purchased, the field on which Hannibal was encamped.

The Royal family had pursued their journey as far as Varennes without interruption; but Messrs. Drouet and Guillaume, who had recognized the king, having taken a cross road to that place, arrived there nearly at the same time that he did *. It was then eleven o'clock, and the night was very dark, the people at Varennes were gone to bed. The carriages were ranged before the houses, waiting on account of a dispute between the guides and the postillions, Drouet and Guillaume hastened into the town, and put up their horses at the sign of the *Golden Arm*, an inn which they found open. As a great deal of company was there, Drouet took the inn-keeper aside, and said to him; "Friend, art thou a good patriot?"—"Yes, surely," answered M. Leblanc (for that was his name).—"Well, my friend, if that is the case, run quickly, and tell all the honest men you know, that the king is at the upper part of the town,

* In the 23d book of this history will be found, several curious particulars respecting the conduct of M. de la Fayette, from which it will appear, by no means strange, that the king was recognized and arrested.

" that

“ that he is coming down to set off, and that we must stop him.” The innkeeper ran immediately to communicate the news to M. Sauff, the procurator of the commune, whilst Drouet and his companion, went down into the town. They considered that before they called the people to arms, or rung the alarm bell, they ought to barricade the streets and the bridge by which the king had to pass. They hastened, therefore, to the bridge of Varennes, close to which a large waggon, loaded with furniture, happened, at that moment, to stand. This they placed across the bridge, and with the addition of some other carriages which they hastily collected; they blocked up the road so as to render it impassable. The carriages at length arrived: it was then near midnight. The two brothers Leblanc, had stopped the first: this was a cabriolet, in which were two women. The procurator of the commune advancing, demanded their passports; they answered, that the persons in the second carriage had them. He went to the second carriage, which was drawn by six horses, and had, on an elevated seat, three guides in a yellow livery: behind it were three horsemen. Paul Leblanc and Joseph Poncin, both national guards, threatened to fire into the coach

unless it stopped. The procurator of the commune, and the commander of the national guards, demanded of the travellers who they were. The queen shewed a passport, which Drouet and Guillaume affirmed was insufficient, because it was only signed by the king. After several objections, "Ladies," said Drouet, "if you are
" foreigners, how came you to have influence
" enough to cause a detachment of dragoons,
" which was at Saint Menéhould, to set off immediately after you? How happened it, that
" when you passed through Clermont, you, by a
" like influence, obtained the escort of a detachment which was at that place? How happens
" it, at the present moment, that you are accompanied by a detachment of hussars?" At the same time M. Sauffé represented to them, that it was too late to inspect the passports, and that the badness of the roads, and the rumours which prevailed in the town, ought to induce the persons in the carriage to descend, and for this purpose he offered them the accommodation of his house; which they accepted.

The king, depending probably on his troops, shewed no uneasiness; but gave his arm to the queen, and Madame Elizabeth, and they all together

gether went into the house of M. Sauffe, a tall-chandler, where they ascended into a small chamber. The king, with an air of content, desired to have some refreshment. The procurator of the commune brought him some cheese and a bottle of Burgundy. The king now began a familiar conversation with his host. He asked him where the mayor of the town was. "With the national assembly," replied Sauffe. At these words the king made a movement of indignation, the first that had escaped him. "Have you a club here?"—"No, sir."—"Ah! so much the better, those wretched clubs have been the ruin of France." During the conversation the king testified a kind of eagerness and inquietude, like a person who expects something impatiently. The queen only let fall, at intervals, a few insignificant words. "You have a bridge here, have you not?" said the king—"Yes, sir, but it is blocked up with waggons."—"Well," answered the king, "I will pass the ford then."—"Oh! the ford is much worse; we are afraid of the Austrians; and I have ordered stakes to be driven in, so that it is not possible for horses to pass."—"Well, order the bridge to be cleared, then."—"I will go and give orders."—He went out, and wrote to the municipality of Clermont:
"Make

“ Make haste, and set off with arms and cannon; send some of the national guards. Make haste, the king is here with the royal family. Make haste ! make haste ! ”

At this moment arrived a detachment of hussars, which had quitted Varennes the preceding evening: there were only ten or twelve men then in the place; a few others were running up. The intrepid Drouet swore, that if they endeavoured to carry off the king, they should not have him alive. The commander of the detachment threatened to fire: immediately Drouet cried, with an energetic voice, “ Cannoneers, to your posts ! ” The cannoneers pointed the guns, in which there was no charge, but the firm appearance of the men who served them imposed on the officers. The national guard arrived, recognized the detachment, conducted them into the town, and advanced the two pieces of cannon toward the house in which the king was. M. de Sauffe, however, perceiving that the hussars had ranged themselves in a line before the old palace; went and informed them that he believed it was the king who was detained; adding, that he thought them too good citizens to favour his escape. The detachment then received

received orders to range themselves in order of battle before the house of the procurator of the commune. M. Goglas, an aid-de-camp who commanded them, asked to speak to the king. He was introduced. "When do we set off?" said the monarch to him.—"I await your orders," answered the aid-de-camp. The king then addressing himself to the major of the national guard, said he should only want fifty or a hundred national guards to accompany him. M. Sauffe, who, till this moment, had amused the king, now seeing an immense multitude of national guards arrive, thought it time to declare to the monarch that he was discovered, and that he must prepare to return to Paris. He entered the chamber to signify this to him. There was in this chamber a portrait of the king. M. Sauffe, after taking a few turns with the original, said to him: "Sire, there is your portrait." Louis XVI. finding that he was thus known, threw himself into the arms of the procurator, and said to him, "I am your king; placed in the capital between the daggers and the bayonets, I come to seek in the country, in the midst of my faithful subjects, that liberty and that peace which you all enjoy." At the same time he embraced all those who stood round him. "Yes, my friend," continued he, "it

“ it is your king who supplicates you : save my
“ wife and my children ; accompany us, guide
“ us ; I promise to grant you and your family an
“ immense fortune.” The queen took the
Dauphin in her arms, and, in a supplicating atti-
tude, employed the means which she thought
most likely to affect him. “ No fire,” said he ;
“ what you ask of me is impossible ; I have two
“ valuable things to preserve, my life and my
“ honour. Expect not to obtain from me any
“ thing contrary to the dictates of honour.” He
then represented to him with warmth the situa-
tion into which he was about to plunge France.

The king persisted in desiring to go to Mont-
medi. The hussars seemed also inclined to second
his views : and made several movements as if to
surround the cannon. The uneasiness of the pa-
triot was augmented by a horseman, who had
met the son of General Bouillé advancing with a
second detachment of hussars ; it was therefore
determined to accelerate, as soon as possible, the
king's departure. At this moment arrived two
couriers : one was an aid-de-camp of M. de la
Fayette, the other brought the orders of the na-
tional assembly. Every instant augmented the
danger. The new detachment of hussars at-
tempted to force a passage ; but were repulsed.

The

The king's departure was immediately decided. The citizens furnished horses and carriages; and the whole party set off on Wednesday the 22d, at ten o'clock in the morning.

A numerous detachment of the regiment of Royal-Allemand soon appeared upon the heights. A party of them advanced, with the son of General Bouillé at their head, but they were unable to cross the river. M. de Choiseul, whom M. de Bouillé had sent to Varennes, ordered one of his horsemen to swim across the river, and inform the general that the king was arrested. At this intelligence he ordered his troops to take horse at three o'clock in the morning: but Maudel, the fourth colonel, threw several obstacles in their way, which prevented the regiment from setting off before five. At a league's distance from Stenay, the general, who was at the head of the Royal-Allemand, ordered them to halt. He told the soldiers that the king was arrested at Varennes, that he wished to come to Montmedi, and that he had chosen them as his body guards. He asked them if they would follow him; they all answered in the affirmative. The general then distributed twenty-five Louis d'ors to each squadron, and a hundred to that which should first surround the carriage.

This unequal division occasioned some disturbance, which it required time for the general to fettle; and perhaps it was this delay which annihilated all his projects. As he came near Varennes, he met a courier, who brought him orders from the king to give up his undertaking.

M. de Bouillé returned, with the regiment of Royal-Allemand, to Stenay, where he inquired the road to the Abbey of Orval in the emperor's dominions, and fled thither with Field-Marshal Clinglin and d'Offlyse. Had it not been for the mysterious advance of the first detachments of cavalry, which either ought not to have been sent, or to have been in greater force; and, for the king's excessive caution in choosing the cross-roads from Clermont to Varennes, he would have terminated his journey as safely as Monsieur, who reached Mons without any obstacle. The king's return to Paris was undisturbed. He was escorted by a prodigious concourse of national guards, who hastened from the neighbouring departments. As he approached Paris, an immense multitude crowded together to behold him; but this multitude, though numberless, were silent and unmoved.

It

It is evident that Louis XVI. fled with an intention to leave the kingdom. No preparations had been made for his reception at Montmedi; on the contrary, all the lodgings were arranged in the Abbey of Orval, beyond the frontier, twelve leagues from Luxembourg, and M. de Condé had repaired thither, at the very same time.

Every day shewed, by new events, how far this conspiracy had extended. At Lille, in the night of the 18th, the strongest circumstances indicated the existence of a plot to deliver up the citadel and the city, which was only defeated by the patriotic vigilance of the regiment de Brie. All the departments shewed an emulation of patriotism: on the first intelligence of the king's flight, they offered their lives and their property, for the defence of their country and of liberty. The energetic brevity of an address from the city of Verdun to the national assembly, attracted general admiration. "We swear to support, with our lives, the execution of your decrees." This single line was followed by four pages of signatures. And yet it was this very city which afterwards opened its gates to the Prussians: hence we may judge how far addresses and oaths are to be trusted to. The

Spartans kept their oaths very differently at Thermopylæ, although their death was inevitable; but those were other times and other manners.

The arrest of the king was a thunder-stroke to the hostile powers. The emperor, the king of Prussia, and the empress of Russia, concluded a hasty peace with Turkey; and the treaty of Sistovia was soon followed by the convention of Pilnitz, in which all the kings of Europe considered the cause of Louis XVI. as their own. This convention imported that they should unite in demanding his liberty, and in avenging any further attacks that should be made on the king, the queen, or the royal family.

It was in such circumstances as these, that the national assembly had to decide on the most important question which had yet been submitted to them. They employed themselves, without loss of time, on the great act of justice which events required of them. We shall soon see how far they were inferior to the task imposed on them. What a field of glory would they have opened to themselves, if, obedient to the wish strongly expressed by almost the whole of the empire, they had decreed a republic, founded on the
basis

basis of the American constitution, which adopts two houses of legislation; if it had said to the king, you have betrayed us: "Depart from France, we fear you not!" From how many evils would this conduct have delivered France! The execrable decemvirate, that government of fire and sword, would never have crushed France! Had they only established an upper house, and a house of commons, they would have avoided a multitude of calamities. Yes, the constituent assembly (what a lesson for legislators!) was undesignedly the first cause of all those political miseries under which we have since groaned, and of which most of the members of that assembly have been themselves the victims. The national assembly did not blush even to surpass the hopes of the aristocracy. The thirty millions * which the constituent body had so liberally granted to the king for the civil list, probably with a view of diminishing the deficit by an impolitic prodigality, enabled this monarch not only to escape punishment, but even to support himself on his throne. The constituent assembly had been induced to grant this immense revenue, by means of money distributed among the members. It is thus that moral, no less than

£1,250,000. sterling.

physical corruption, engenders a corruption of a similar nature. History does not furnish another example of a king, who, after being convicted of several different attempts to betray his country, and to excite a civil war, was, nevertheless, re-established on his throne, without conquering it by force; and re-established by that very assembly which, out of royal gratitude, he would, if possible, have massacred.

The flight of the monarch had put an end to the divisions which prevailed among the popular part of the assembly. They all united themselves in the society of the friends of the constitution (the Jacobins); but after the decision which preserved to the king his crown, a great schism took place in that society: the one party thinking it necessary to form a league, for the support of that constitution which they accused their opponents, not without reason, of wishing to overturn. They stiled the other party republicans *, and withdrew

* The Jacobins were composed of three parties, the *patriots*, men of pure, but extravagant principles, the *Orleanists*, or royalists, who desired to make d'Orleans king, and the *moderate* party, or royalists, attached to Louis XVI. and the constitution. The latter agreed tolerably well with the *Capetian* royalists, or friends of the old monarchy. In political, as in physical principles, extremes frequently meet. Thus we have

withdrew to the convent of the Feuillans, on which account they were themselves afterwards distinguished by the name of Feuillans. The Jacobins, whose principles were the most violent, were favoured by most of the popular societies. Meanwhile, the constituent assembly, desirous of putting an end to its labours, dissatisfied with its own errors, and seeing the public confidence ready to forsake it, made haste to revise its decrees, to distinguish those which only regarded matters of detail, and therefore bore the name of regulations, and to draw up the constitutional act, which was to be presented to the king. He accepted it in the midst of the national assembly, before whom he appeared for that purpose on the 14th of September 1791, and swore to

have since seen the anarchists, directed by Babœuf, unite with the royalists, friends of Louis XVIII., and employ the same means, though aiming at a different end. The Orleanists agreed with the patriotic republicans in their wish to overturn the constitution of 1791; and the Capetian royalists agreed, for the moment, with the real friends of that constitution, hoping, that if Louis XVI. were but restored, he would soon be able to destroy it. Another proof that extremes meet, is that nothing is nearer to despotism than anarchy, and that nothing leads more quickly to anarchy than extreme despotism. We might here mention the affair of the Champ de Mars; but, to avoid repetition, we refer the reader to Bailly's memorial, inserted at the end of this book; his account of those events is of the utmost veracity.

maintain the constitution which they had decreed. But of what use was this oath? It would assuredly have been better to say to Louis XVI., and to every public functionary, "We require of you no oath: oaths do not restrain the vicious, and they are useless in the virtuous: besides, we have not the right of scrutinizing your opinions. It is your interest to discharge the duty which is imposed on you, and to execute faithfully the office committed to your care; we shall watch over you: wo to you, if you deceive us!"

Let us for a moment cast a view over the space which we have passed. The constituent assembly had now concluded its long labours; and had placed itself before the eyes of posterity. The moment of judging it was arrived. We shall not here expatiate on the great political errors which it committed in decreeing a civil list of 30 millions *, in supposing liberty compatible with an hereditary monarchy, in establishing what it called a civil constitution for the clergy; and, above all, in requiring an oath by the conditions of an intolerant and persecuting law, which was one of the principal

* £.1,250,000 sterling.

causes of the war of La Vendée. Neither shall we speak of its oversight, in not having given us the English constitution. The establishment of an upper house would have prevented the emigration of a brilliant nobility, and of a number of rich and virtuous men; it would have elevated France to the highest degree of prosperity which it was possible to attain; and would have prevented the foreign and internal war, together with that horrible mass of follies, disgraces, crimes, and sufferings, which we owe to the faction of d'Orleans, and after them to the decemvirs. The constituent assembly committed a still greater error in not having given us the system of two houses of legislation, as it was afterwards fixed by the constitution of 1795. This system is more conformable to the principles of equality, of philosophy, and of true liberty: it conduces to the greatest happiness, particularly to that of future generations; and its adoption would have prevented all the crimes of the decemvirate. The English constitution, even if modified, would not have afforded equal advantages, but it would have contributed to the happiness of the present generation, by delivering it from the evils which it has since suffered. The commonwealth moreover would not have been

been exposed to those numerous dangers which it has only surmounted as it were by miracle. The constituent body ought not to have exposed it to dangers, the result of which it was impossible to calculate. It is, after all, a great question, whether the interests of the present ought to be sacrificed to those of future generations, even with the expectation of an ultimate increase of happiness. We are inclined to the negative.

We shall now proceed to consider two questions, no less delicate of solution than the preceding: and we shall take, for the most part, as our guide, the brilliant and profound author of the *Correspondence of an Inhabitant of Paris with his Friends in Swisserland and England*. The first of these questions should be stated, as we think, in these terms: "What is the relation which the doctrine of equality bears to the organization of the body politic, and the maintenance of that social harmony, without which there is neither security nor happiness?" In order to examine this question thoroughly, we must inquire whether there are not useful errors, dangerous truths, salutary prejudices, political veils, which must by no means be destroyed; we must ask, how far mankind ought to be deceived for their

their own advantage ; and whether a people, suddenly invested with sovereign power, and furnished with metaphysical and political arguments, a people at the same time impetuous and enthusiastic, is not supplied with arms to destroy itself in a short time, is not ready to become the prey of every faction, and to turn the best things to abuse, as a madman directs against himself the arms which were entrusted to him for defence ? At least the assembly ought to have placed the antidote beside the poison, the declaration of duties next to the declaration of rights. We even think that it has not only divulged to the people truths which it was evident that they would abuse, but they have also advanced great errors. In our opinion inequality exists to a greater degree in the state of nature than in the social state. In the state of nature the weak man, far from being able to resist the strong one, depends entirely upon him : in society, on the contrary, the weak man finds a counterpoise against strength. In short, we think they should have said, “ Men are born unequal in strength, “ in health, in moral, intellectual, and physical “ qualities ; but their union in society diminishes, softens, compensates, and almost annihilates this inequality by the mutual protection of individuals, and by the support “ which

“ which the weak find in the protecting power
“ of the laws.”

The other accusations which we shall bring against the first constituent assembly, is that they thought more of destroying than of rebuilding ; that they surrounded themselves with ruins and malcontents ; and that they neglected the maxim of the greatest legislators, which has always been rather to make laws which are likely to be observed, than those which are abstractedly best ; and, in order to ensure their permanence, to deviate as little as possible from the rooted habits of a people. The constituent body exposed the revolution to the danger of all kinds of conspiracies, and to the effusion of blood which resulted from a precipitate reform of all abuses at once.

Another error of the constituent assembly, which produced the most lamentable consequences, was their not having temporised in regard to the colonies, and not having deferred the revolution of those countries until after the termination of our revolution.

But notwithstanding the great reproaches which may be made to this assembly, it must be acknowledged that history presents us with no period

riod in which any set of men, in so short a space, did so many great things, and such as the absolute reigns of ten successive kings could not have operated. It must also be allowed that no assembly every displayed such a combination of talents, and such an aggregation of knowledge.

Memorial or Address of the immortal Author of The History of Astronomy (Bailly) to his Fellow-Citizens, containing curious Particulars respecting the King's Flight to Varennes, and also respecting La Fayette and the Affair of the Champ de Mars.

WE shall have occasion, in the course of this work, to scatter some flowers on the tomb of the celebrated but unfortunate Bailly ; and we shall render to his innocence and probity all the justice which they deserve. It is very satisfactory to us to exhibit them in still more striking colours, by means of the irrefragable proofs contained in the following production, which is almost unknown, though printed at the time, under the title of *J. S. Bailly to his Fellow-Citizens* ; because this memorial, though written with the most perfect moderation, though it accused

no

no one, and was confined solely to the defence of a person accused, was not suffered to appear : no bookseller, no newsmen dared to sell it ; and this circumstance is one of the most striking proofs of the universal oppression which was exercised over a people who were only free in name. Alas ! the spectre of calumny seats itself but too often on the tomb of a great man. He is persecuted whilst living ; he is even pursued after death. We have thought it our duty to repel the attacks which calumny might bring against the memory of one of our most illustrious citizens ; of the man whose part in the revolution was most honourable, and whose sufferings were most acute. He sustained all the ferocity of a populace, whose idol he had been, and he was shamefully abandoned by a people whom he never ceased to esteem. He died, like the just man described by Plato, overwhelmed with ignominy. They spat upon him, they burned a flag under his eyes : some hired ruffians even approached to strike him, in spite of his executioners, who themselves were ashamed of such brutality. He was covered with mud ; he was detained three hours at the place of execution, and the scaffold of the President of the Tennis Court was erected in the midst of filth and ordure. A chilling rain, which fell in torrents,

rents, added to the horrors of his situation. With his hands bound behind his back he sometimes begged for an end to his sufferings ; but these words were uttered with a calmness worthy of one of the first philosophers in Europe. To a man, who said to him " Bailly, you tremble !" he replied, " My friend, it is with cold."

His death recalls to mind that of Cordorcet, another most virtuous philosopher, who employed himself, when in chains, on the improvement of the human race ; who died with the same calmness as Bailly ; and who, like him, was one of the victims of those monsters, hideous with crimes and stained with blood, by whom we were governed.

The following paper is the more valuable, as it throws a great light upon the events which preceded the flight of the king ; on the artful, perfidious, and ambitious conduct of M. La Fayette, and on the famous day of the Champ de Mars :

J. S. BAILLY to his Fellow-Citizens.

I WAS summoned, as a witness, on the trial of Marie-Antoinette : I found myself named and inculpated in the act of accusation directed
against

against her. In the course of my deposition, I was interrogated respecting the events of the 17th of July at the Champ de Mars : I was also questioned respecting my connections with la Fayette and la Rochefoucault. It was suggested that I had had criminal relations with the *ci-devant* court : and I was asked concerning certain secret meetings, said to have been held at the Castle. My answers, satisfactory as they were, could only be heard by the citizens present at the trial.

He who has occupied an important post owes to the people an account of his conduct in the exercise of those functions with which they have entrusted him. I am going, therefore, at present to discharge this duty.

The act of accusation against Marie-Antoinette contains the following passage : " It is manifest, from the declarations of Louis Charles Capet, and of the girl Capet, that la Fayette, a favourite, *in every sense of the word* *, of the

* Any one would conclude from this expression, that la Fayette was very much in the the queen's good graces. She could not endure him, and often used to say to her friends, " Must I always have that coxcomb before my eyes ?" I have this anecdote from persons of veracity. Recourse was had to la Fayette only because he was commander of the national guard, and might have disconcerted their projects.

“ widow Capet, and Bailly, then mayor, were
“ present at the flight from the palace of the
“ Thuilleries; and that they favoured it with all
“ their power.”

It is false that I was at the Thuilleries on the day of the 20th of June. It is false, that I in any manner facilitated the flight of Louis's family. It is true, on the contrary, that I did every thing in my power to prevent it.

Upon being informed of the declaration made by young Louis and his sister, I requested the President of the tribunal to demand of the accused: 1st, At what hour she and Louis left the Thuilleries on the 20th of June? 2dly, If I was present? The President replied, that the accused had, in her examination, anticipated my questions, by declaring, 1st, That they had set off, between eleven and twelve o'clock at night; and 2dly, That I was not present. Thus the testimony of the mother overthrew that of the children.

For several months it had been rumoured, that the flight of Louis was at hand. I had constantly transmitted to the committee of research all the information that I received. These ru-

mours were renewed on the 19th and 20th. I had been for seventeen days ill of a quinsy, from which I was beginning to recover. On the evening of Monday the 20th I received fresh information, which induced me to send for three of the nearest municipal officers to my house, that I might not have to decide alone on the exigences of the moment.

I sent for the commander in chief of the national guards; and in the meanwhile dressed myself at all events. The citizen Cochon de l'Apparent, at that time member of the constituent assembly, and of the committee of research, came to communicate to me what he knew: he was witness to what passed at my house, and can give testimony of my conduct. Upon the arrival of the commander in chief, we communicated to him the information which we had received, and the apprehensions which we had entertained. We reminded him that it was his duty to guard the Thuilleries. He answered, that he was going to the palace; that he would give the strictest orders; and that, though he thought the supposed project very improbable, he would take care to prevent the possibility of its execution. La Fayette went in fact to the
palace,

palace, and returned a little after twelve o'clock to my house. He assured us that all the gates were fast; and that he had himself renewed the watch-word at all the entrances: he added, (an expression which I very well remember,) that a mouse could not get out of the palace. He further said, that Gouvion, the major-general, would pass the night at the gate of Villequier. These are the facts which are in the knowledge of the persons before-mentioned: besides which, the steward and porter of the house, Jean Baptiste Mousson my present servant, my former coachman named Bellanger, François the inspector of the lights, and all those who were in my service on the 20th of June, can attest that I did not leave my house on that day.

Louis and his family, it is well known, travelled with a passport given by Montmorin, for a person named, if I recollect right, the Baroneſs de Knoff. Some days before their flight, in looking over my letters, I found that M. Simolin, the Russian ambassador, had applied to me for a passport for the Baroneſs de Knoff. I had some passports ready signed which had been delivered to me by the minister. After a moment's reflection, I said, "But why does the Russian ambassador desire a passport from me for a
A A 2 "foreigner?"

"foreigner? he ought to apply to the minister
"for foreign affairs." I referred him, therefore,
to that minister: and thus escaped, by good
fortune, the snare which was laid for me. Mont-
morin, it is known, declared that he gave two
passports, on an assurance that the first was
burnt.

It is, therefore, false, that I was present at the
flight of Louis, and that I favoured with all my
power this liberticide project. It is, on the con-
trary, most indisputable, that I did every thing in
my power to prevent it.

I was interrogated respecting certain private
meetings said to have been held at the Thuille-
ries, and composed, as it was asserted, of in-
triguers, and members of the constituent assem-
bly, Mirabeau, Barnave, Lameth, &c.: it seemed
that I was supposed to have assisted at them. I
affirm that I never had any knowledge of such
meetings; that I never assisted at them; that I
was never connected with any of those who were
considered as party-leaders, such as Mirabeau,
Barnave, and the two Lameths; that my con-
nections with la Fayette necessarily resulted from
the mutual relation of our offices, that the con-
fidence which I had in him, especially during the
first

first year, was dictated by the whole nation ; but that those connections were only official, and that I never possessed his peculiar confidence *.

It was asserted, that some of these meetings were held at la Rochefoucault's. I answered, that I knew several deputies, and amongst others la Fayette, often met in the evening at the house of la Rochefoucault ; but that I was never there myself.

The unfortunate day of the Champ de Mars was mentioned : and it was termed a conspiracy to assassinate the true patriots. I answered, that neither I nor the municipality of Paris had any knowledge or suspicion of a plot against the patriots. The national assembly being informed that mobs were collecting to resist the decree

* In fact, what point of contact, what union, except that resulting from official intercourse, could there be between an intriguer, a courtier, a man of perfidy and dissimulation, and a philosopher confining himself strictly to the duties of his place, and a stranger to all intrigues ; but, perhaps, on that very account less able to guard against them. It must be owned, however, that if la Fayette was blameable on the 5th and 6th of October, and on the 20th of June, neither he, nor the court, were at all so on the day of the Champ de Mars.

passed on the preceding evening, and judging that every appearance of resistance against the law was criminal, ordered the department and the municipality to restrain those mobs by all the means with which the constitution had invested them. The official accounts, which are preserved among the archives of the national assembly, and of the municipality, prove that the municipal body had in the morning employed all the means of persuasion to disperse the multitude.

When the municipality in a body afterwards entered the Champ de la Federation, every one knows that the magistrates had not time to make the summonses prescribed by the law; but that the municipality and the national guard were assailed with a shower of stones; that one of the rioters fired a pistol shot against the municipality; and that the ball, after passing by me, struck the thigh of a dragoon of the troops of the line, who had joined the national guards, and who afterwards died of the wound.

It has been said that the authors of those disorders, and of this murder, were not at all connected with the citizens assembled round the altar of their country. But in fact the national

guard only fired upon the bank from which the stones and the pistol shots had proceeded. It is added, that the men who occupied this bank had been sent by la Fayette and me. This accusation is without proof; and it is absolutely false. I make this affirmation as far as regards myself. It is, moreover, evident, that if these men had been our agents they would doubtless have avoided firing either on me or on the municipality.

But, it is said, la Fayette was reconciled, in June 1791, with Lameth and the others, and they altogether plotted the downfall of liberty. I know not what plots may have been formed by men with whom I never had any connection. I remarked, indeed, that reconciliation, and I was surprised at it*; but (it cannot be said that I was reconciled with the Lameths, since I had neither any quarrel nor connection with them. I do not recollect that I have spoken with either of them for two minutes together since the revolution. I have never had a continued intercourse with any of the deputies, unless it was

* Bailly has, indeed, a little before observed, that La Fayette alone possessed his particular confidence during the first year. Notwithstanding Bailly's unsuspecting simplicity, he soon discovered the duplicity of La Fayette.

what the affairs of the city gave me in the different committees. If la Fayette engaged in any intrigues, he was too well acquainted with my patriotism to make me his confidant.

With regard to my connections with the court, a circumstance, which fully proves my innocence, is, that amongst the numerous papers belonging to Louis, which were found both at the house of Laporte and in the iron closet, papers in which a great number of persons are implicated in affairs more or less culpable, there is not one which can draw on me the smallest reproach. What is more, I am named in some of those papers, but it is as an enemy. Some attack me by sarcasm, and endeavour to place me in a ridiculous point of view (see Cazotte's Letters); others, such as Talon, say, "Sire, if you make such sacrifices, Bailly will come and make you a fine harangue," Others say, and that of the date of 1791, "The mayor of Paris will be managed, so as to prevent him from giving us any further trouble." Finally, some of them talk of the necessity of taking off my head.

I have gained nothing in the revolution: on the contrary, it has caused me to lose some valuable

luable places; and it has almost entirely destroyed my fortune. I have need, my dear fellow-citizens, of your esteem: I am sure that you will sooner or later do me justice, but I have need of that justice whilst I am alive and in the midst of you. I had previously deserved it by 50 years of continued probity; and my claim cannot but be augmented and confirmed by nearly three years of entire devotion to your interests with no other recompence than your esteem.

(Signed)

BAILLY.

Bailly communicated his memorial to one of his companions in captivity, a man of distinguished talents, and his friend, who said, "If they read this memorial, it is impossible for them to condemn you." "They will not read it," answered Bailly; "and though they should, they would nevertheless condemn me: they desire my life, and they will have it. I think the violence of their hatred is such that they will even change the nature of the punishment for me; they will not think it sufficiently cruel." He then added, "This idea afflicts
" me,

“ me, not on my own account, but on that of
 “ the unhappy victims who will suffer after
 “ me; for the death of the guillotine is very
 “ easy*.”

BOOK XXII.

The LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

Opening of the Legislative Assembly.—Its marked Division into Two Parties.—The King puts his Veto upon the Measures adopted by the Legislative Body against the Emigrants and the Priests.—Renewal of the Ministry.—Unpopularity of the new Ministers.—Troubles in Avignon.—Particulars respecting the Glaciere—Decree of Accusation against the Minister Delessart.

FRANCE had been rather reformed than injured by the violent tempests which it had experienced; and if the constituent assembly had become degenerate and decayed, if it had yielded to the corruptions of gold, and to the remainder of a

* Such was the end of a man who discovered not only the existence, but the local situation of a civilized nation, anterior to all the nations at present known even by tradition, History, mythology, monuments, geography, and astronomy, all concur in proving his discovery.

fervile

servile prejudice in favour of hereditary royalty, the public mind had, on the contrary, acquired such a degree of energy, that its violence became no less dangerous than the weakness of the constituent body. The term, republic, was in every mouth, its idea occupied every mind, particularly in those numerous popular societies which were spread over the whole surface of France. But there was great reason to apprehend, (what the event has but too well justified,) that the nation would fall into the delirium of democracy; that is to say, a democracy in which the multitude has too strong an influence. A democracy on such a basis, without a counterpoise, without a regulating principle, is a most destructive evil. It is of all forms of government that which is least applicable to a great empire; nor is it even suitable for a small one. Hence Lycurgus, when asked by some person why he had established, at Lacedæmon, a balance of powers instead of a pure democracy, replied, "Begin by establishing yourself in your own house." The answer of this great legislator ought to satisfy those who are intoxicated with the madness of *demagogie*. Unfortunately most of the republicans of that day were only raving demagogues. Add to this discordance of minds
a con-

a constitution impregnated with the poison of anarchy; join to both these that war, I will not say of religion, but of priests, which was more fatal than all our other dissensions; and you will see that France, like a country still trembling and smoking, seemed to threaten every day a new explosion.

The first sitting of the legislative assembly seemed, however, to presage union and peace, and the fullest harmony between the two powers. The constitutional act was introduced into the assembly with a sort of religious ceremony. Each deputy ascended the tribune, and laying his hand on this political gospel, swore to maintain, with all his power, the constitution decreed in the years 1789, 1790, and 1791.

But an unexpected storm arising on a sudden, struck the friends of peace with alarm, and reanimated the hopes of those who had only yielded to circumstances with regret. The king wrote to the assembly to inform them of his intention of coming, as soon as they should be regularly constituted, to unite himself with the new representatives of the people. Under pretence that the legislative body was
the

the only judge of its own internal police, they instituted a new form of ceremony: they refused to give the monarch the titles of *Sire* and *your Majesty*: they determined that the members of the assembly might be covered, at will, in his presence; in short they abolished all those marks of respect, or, according to some opinions, of servility with which the English constitution has wisely surrounded the throne, but which, in the fervour of our first days of liberty, appeared like remains of idolatry and vestiges of ancient servitude. This imprudent and hostile conduct toward the supreme chief of the executive power laid the foundation of discord: the assembly itself, alarmed at its own proceeding, hastened to repeal this decree the very next day; but it made an indelible impression on the government.

The constituent assembly had decreed, that the revolution was terminated; but they had not lulled to sleep the spirit of hatred, obviated jealousy, or paralysed faction. A large body of men had, or supposed that they had, an interest in destroying the new government. The king alone had a true interest in supporting it; but neither he nor the court knew this. His journey to Varennes had given an impression of his insincerity

insincerity very difficult to eradicate: the most popular characters did not cease to repeat, and perhaps with reason, that the constitution must be destroyed, unless a change of the dynasty took place. The faction of d'Orleans excited a continual agitation, and kept up this cry without ceasing.

The constituent assembly, originally composed of the deputies of three rival orders, rather than of representatives of the people, found itself naturally divided, according to the different prejudices and interests of its members. The legislative assembly, formed of homogeneous elements, did not seem to contain within itself the same seeds of dissension: nevertheless discord soon appeared to hover over it. The schism of the friends of the constitution had formed two centres of union, two rallying points for the opposite parties, the *Jacobins* and *Feuillans*. It is not forgotten that a part of the Jacobins sincerely desired a republic, whilst the others were attached to d'Orleans; and that amongst the Feuillans, one party were attached to the constitution and Louis XVI., the other favoured the constitution only in the hope that Louis would sooner or later overturn it. The division of the mother-society had been strongly felt in the affiliated clubs;

clubs; some of whom attached themselves to the new chief, but the far greater number remained united to that which kept possession of the ancient place of meeting at the Jacobins. The name is every thing to the generality of mankind; and if the seceders had preserved the original name of Jacobins, and the place of meeting, they would perhaps have prevailed over their adversaries: so predominant is the force of habit! so powerful is the magic of names!

Most of the new deputies, on their arrival at Paris, had hastened to join one or other of these societies, both of whom called themselves friends of the constitution, and both sought to bend it to their own prejudices and interests, or rather to the prejudices and interests of the chiefs, by whose hands they were invisibly directed. An exaggeration of principle, which, in the eyes of the vulgar, is the seal of patriotism, gained the Jacobins the greatest portion of popular favour. By continual denunciations against the ministers, the generals, and the magistrates, and by energetic declamations, they gave to their proceedings a dramatic kind of interest, well calculated to gain a great number of spectators. The constitution, after which the whole nation had so long sighed, was completed; and yet the public misfortunes

misfortunes were continually augmenting. Every day beheld new attacks on persons and property. It had been thought that the maintenance of public liberty would be ensured, by delegating to the justices of peace the direction of the police with regard to personal security; but France was not yet ripe for so sublime an institution. Never was it more clearly proved that states are not governed by the abstract speculations of metaphysics, and that the most admirable laws are not good, unless they are adapted to the circumstances of time and place, and to the physical and moral state of the people for whom they are made.

Amidst our political convulsions, public credit hastened to decay. The relative value of the assignats decreased in an alarming progression. Famine, an evil which is generally the result of other public evils, and especially of anarchy, was soon felt, even in the midst of abundance. The husbandman, more susceptible from his ignorance of the impressions arising from false alarms, had, from the beginning, shewn an invincible repugnance against the assignats; he manifested it still more at this period. It must be acknowledged also, that the abuse which was made of the facility of their emission proved, that
a natural

a natural cupidity, with regard to this object, had rendered its instinct no less sure than provident. In many places the armed force was employed; and violence, as is always the case, impeded the course of commerce instead of promoting it. The markets were no longer supplied with provision, and the small quantity of corn which was exposed to sale rose to a price which the poorer classes could no longer reach. Tumults took place in the markets; and the rioters set an arbitrary price on the grain, or even carried it off by force. They often compelled the municipal officers to put themselves at their head, in order to legalise their violence by the presence of the magistrates. The whole winter passed in these lamentable disorders. The legislative body, instead of seconding the government, thwarted its proceedings; they doubted its sincerity, and therefore, they sought to render it odious. The ministers, on the other hand, scarcely conducted themselves any better. Instead of conciliating the passions of the assembly, they irritated them by the most imprudent provocations; and openly testified their contempt for the proceedings of the legislative assembly. The faction of d'Orleans aggravated these disorders and this anarchy, by means of their numerous and powerful assemblies scattered over the whole of France. Mean-

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while, the deputies had brought from their departments that desire of signalizing themselves, often by a fatal violence, which is so predominant in a government, where all the honourable and lucrative employments being in the hands of the people, it is a step toward honours and fortune to acquire a certain degree of celebrity,

In the relative situation in which the government stood to the national assembly, a more polite and well-intentioned ministry would have found, in the unquiet activity of that assembly, the means of connecting themselves with it, and of covering the most delicate operations with its inviolability: but the king's council were desirous of marking strongly the line of demarcation between the two powers,

The repeal of the law against the emigrants produced none of the effects which were expected from it. No sooner were the barriers of the empire reopened, than the emigration recommenced with new violence. The roads were covered with noblemen and malcontents, who were repairing to Flanders, to the electorates, and particularly to Coblenz, which had become their capital. The king's military household had been re-established there, not as it existed

at the period of the revolution, but as it appeared on the accession of Louis XVI. to the crown. The etiquette of Versailles was transported to Coblentz: and if the princes had lost their grandeur, they, at least, retained their fullen insolence, and their haughty insignificance.

The assembly thought it necessary to take speedy measures to repress them. The first decree attacked the conspiracy of the emigrants in the person of its chief, by requiring Louis Stanislaus Xavier, a prince of France, to return to the kingdom within two months, under penalty of forfeiting his eventual right to the regency. A more rigorous decree quickly followed this act of the legislative body: it declared, from that moment, all Frenchmen assembled without the kingdom, to be suspected of conspiracy; and ordained, that all those who should be in a state of assemblage on the 1st of January following should be punished with death. But how was it possible to prove this assemblage?

The decree was carried to the king, on the same day, for his sanction. The monarch, who had entered into real or feigned negotiations with all the neighbouring powers, appeared alarmed at it. Leopold, on his side, did not

declare war, neither did he make a satisfactory avowal of pacific intentions; but confined himself to evasive and dilatory answers. The king took advantage of his right to suspend the decisions of the legislative body. He opposed his *veto*, or refusal. This first exercise of his power, on so unpopular an occasion, greatly alienated the people. A second, and still more unfortunate attempt, lost the king, entirely and for ever, the affection of the multitude.

The non-conforming priests were generally, and with reason, looked upon as one of the great causes of the disorders of the state. All were not guilty, but the greatest part were highly deserving of blame. All that ambition, irritated avarice, and fanaticism could devise, had been put in execution by many of their leaders: but what measures ought to have been taken against them? We have already observed how wrong it was to require of them an oath, and how much that error was increased, by interfering still further in affairs of religion. This fault, however, having once been committed, it ought to have been determined, either to banish all the refractory priests at once, (which would perhaps have been less cruel than to persecute and massacre them

them illegally in detail, as was done in many places *,) or else the principles of justice, reason, and humanity should have been followed, principles which direct the adoption of the mildest measures; for it is intolerance which excites fanaticism. But reason was not listened to: the members of the department of Paris presented, on the 5th of December, that famous petition in which they developed those principles of toleration which we have above detailed. But this petition itself was a great fault in politics; on the one hand, it gave the authority of a great example to those who might be tempted to strain the application of a law, the injustice of which an administrative body had demonstrated; on the other hand, it presented an example still more dangerous, that of interposing between the assembly and the king, and of creating a third power in the state. In circumstances of so much difficulty the ministers held a council, they even summoned to it Alexander Lameth and Barnave, who delivered an opinion which was afterwards the foundation of a decree of accusation

* That which appears most cruel at the first view, is often the least so in reality. Such a banishment would have prevented both the massacre of a vast number of priests, and the effusion of blood which took place in La Vendée.

against them *. It was decided that the king should refuse his sanction also to this decree.

The consequences of the two acts of authority which the king had thus exercised were not difficult to be foreseen. The agitators, both within and without the kingdom, redoubled their efforts. Thus, in times of so much disorder, wisdom as well as rashness, respect for the laws like their infraction, tended equally, by means of malignity and malevolence, to the dissolution of the new body politic, and to an inevitable revolution. The government was the more unhappily situated, as it seemed to have drawn down on itself the ruins by whose fall it was crushed. The nobles and the priests openly boasted of the protection of the court. Louis XVI. had only a choice of precipices, and he fell among several which he might have avoided.

Montmorin and Duportail retired from the administration, the one fatigued with the storms

* The cause, or the pretext of this decree of accusation was a paper found at the Palace of the Thuilleries, intitled, *Project of the Ministerial Committee, concerted with Messrs. Lameth and Barnave.* 1st, To refuse the sanction. 2d, To write to the princes in an open and fraternal manner. 3d, To issue a new proclamation respecting the emigrants, requiring the foreign powers not to permit their assemblages.

of

of the first révolution, and fearing that he should be unable to contend with as much force and success against the rising tempest; the other, yielding after some ineffectual efforts to the odium which his intimate connections with Alexander Lameth had excited, and to the suspicions which began to be directed against him, quitted a station which he was no longer able to fill. La Luzerne had already given up the administration of the marine. The new nominations were not all fortunate. The foreign department was committed to Delessart, who, from his administrative and financial knowledge, might have been more useful in that of the interior. The marine was intrusted to Bertrand, formerly inspector of the harbour of Brest, whose genius and talents would have enabled him to serve the state effectually, had not his opposition to the new constitution been so well known and so real. The administration of the interior, and that of the finances, which had been united under Delessart, were now divided. Tarbis, formerly first commissioner, and who was celebrated for probity, experience, and talents, was placed at the head of the finances. The department of the interior was intrusted to Cahier de Gerville, a man of tried patriotism and of ancient virtue; but, whom this very virtue rendered perhaps un-

equal to an office which, presenting incessantly to his view the mournful spectacle of political disorder, left him neither the calmness necessary to a perfect exertion of his abilities, nor the sad courage to remain a passive spectator of so many evils. Finally, the war department was given to Louis de Narbonne, a young general, who joined to a character of audacity a mind fertile in resources; but these brilliant qualities covered the most violent ambition.

The ministry had hitherto supported itself by the unity of principle, and the harmony which reigned among its members; but dissension now began to appear against them. Narbonne wished to seize the reigns which Delessart wished to retain. The council was divided into two parties. The enemies of the constitution did not fail to take advantage of this circumstance, in order to destroy one by means of the other. Meanwhile the clubs, the tribunes of the assembly, and the public squares themselves resounded with continual denunciations against the ministers.

The different powers of Europe, to whom the king had notified his acceptance of the constitution, had returned evasive answers. The assemblages of the emigrants continued. The convention

convention or treaty of Pilnitz still existed, and the King of Sweden declared himself the Agamemnon of the league formed against France. The most active measures were taken for resisting this threatening combination of crowned heads. The generals who were appointed were those whom, at that time, the people themselves would have nominated. The event, however, has shewn that the choice was by no means fortunate. The names of la Fayette, Luckner, and Rochambeau commanded universal confidence; but the two first answered but ill the public expectation. Louis de Narbonne himself set off to visit the frontier towns, but this was only a vain ostentation, and a perfidious testimony of patriotism: Narbonne was infected with the most virulent aristocracy.

Delessart had already been the object of several injurious denunciations. He was reproached with being the author of the massacres of Avignon and the disasters of the Comtat. This unfortunate country had experienced more than any other the convulsions of the revolution. Without a public force, and given up to the rage of parties, it had several times been deluged with blood: each new contest had produced a
renewal

renewal of atrocities in which the actors alone were changed, but the same character of ferocious cannibalism universally prevailed. Almost at the very instant when the union of the Comtat to the French empire was proclaimed, Lescuyer, secretary of the municipality, was murdered at the foot of the altar. A few days afterward the opposite party gained the upper hand, and the history of human crimes was augmented with one of the most execrable massacres which have ever disgraced any age or nation.

On Sunday the 31st of October, several citizens were arrested, and confined in the palace. During the night above fifty were slaughtered in cold blood, and the mode of executing them was more cruel than the execution itself. Fathers were butchered on the bleeding bodies of their sons, mothers on those of their daughters; twelve women were ripped up: and all these victims, after having been mutilated, mangled, and chopped in pieces, were piled together in a hole called the *Glacière*, which was immediately surrounded with a wall. Claude Fauchet several times endeavoured to render Deleffart responsible for those enormities, which, he said, that minister

minister might have prevented, by dispatching commissioners charged with the union of the Comtat to France. "I wish his life to be spared," exclaimed he, "but it should be to prolong his sufferings, it should be to breathe the effluvia of the reeking carcases of the Glacière." The minister easily repelled this horrid accusation; but his enemies did not cease from persecuting him, and events seemed to conspire in their favour.

Meanwhile Narbonne exerted himself strongly to bring on the war. He had, on his own authority, entered into a negotiation with the Duke of Brunswick, to whom he offered the rank of generalissimo of the armies of France. This prince refused the offer, but not so positively as to preclude any idea that he might ultimately accede to it. The ambition of Brunswick was no less known than his talents: and it was feared that he would be seduced by the hope of obtaining a crown with which a powerful faction already dazzled his eyes. The connection of the young minister with Brissot, Carra, and several others, afforded no less cause of suspicion. His dismissal was resolved on, and M. de Grave was nominated as his successor.

On

On the same day Cahier de Gerville and Bertrand gave in their resignation. Delessart appeared triumphant, but he stood on the brink of a precipice. All the friends of Narbonne united their efforts; and the assembly decreed that he bore with him their regret*. The day of his dismissal was the day on which his rival's fall was determined. Brissot ascended the tribune, and accused Delessart of having concealed the important facts of the conferences at Pilnitz, and the manœuvres of the neighbouring kings. The decree of accusation was instantly passed, and transmitted to the executive power.

* A Pichegru, a Jourdan, or a Dagobert, might deserve this regret. But a Narbonne! a young man newly promoted to the administration! This decree reminds us of Linguet's observation, that numerous assemblies are generally ready to commit all the follies to which men of intrigue incite them. This decree dishonoured the assembly without doing honour to Narbonne; for undeserved praise is no honour.

BOOK XXIII.

The Assembly almost unanimously decrees War with the Foreign Powers.—Letter of M. de la Fayette.—Day of the 20th of June.—March of the combined Armies toward our Frontiers.—Days of the 10th of August and of the 2d of September.—Suspension of the King.—He is removed, with the Royal Family, to the Thuilleries.—Emigration of M. de la Fayette.—New Ministers.—Papers found at the Palace of the Thuilleries.—Decree of Accusation against Barnave and others.—Surrender of Longwi and Verdun.—Honours of the Pantheon decreed to Baurepaire.—Reflections on the Operations of the Legislative Assembly, and on the Colonies.

FROM the very commencement of the revolution a war between France and the crowned heads of Europe was inevitable. All the *offices* and *conclusa*, therefore, of the Germanic empire, all the pretended negotiations of the King of the French, and even the debates of the legislative body on the question whether France should declare war, or rather if she should consider it as declared on the part of the Emperor, were only to be considered as measures of that nature

ture which each party commonly takes, in order to assure an appearance of moderation and justice. It was useless to examine whether we should declare war, since that had been already done by the treaty of Pilnitz, by the assemblages of the emigrants in the dominions of our enemies, and still more by the nature of our revolution. The combined powers would, at all events, have seized the most favourable moment of attacking us. The only question, therefore, to be examined was, whether we were ready to engage in this grand struggle; or whether, though unprepared, it was not more advantageous to attack than to be attacked. Considering the volatile and impetuous character of the French nation, we think that it was well-judged to begin the attack, though we were by no means prepared, and though we could not but expect frequent instances of treachery. It was the soundest policy to take advantage of this first ardour, which might soon have vanished. In vain did Robespierre oppose the war. It was decreed almost unanimously*.

Let us for a moment defer the recital of the events of this campaign, to strew some flowers

* It is doubtful what would have been the event of the revolution, if the foreign powers had given us no pretext for attacking them, and had abstained from invading us until we had been exhausted with the revolutionary convulsions.

on the tomb of a brilliant and philanthropic writer, Ceruti, author of the funeral oration of Mirabeau. His writings are not so striking as to reach to very distant ages; but the curious and enlightened critic will nevertheless distinguish them from the mass of trifling compositions destitute of imagination and originality with which we are daily overwhelmed. A verse, a line, an expression of Ceruti's afford more matter for reflection than whole pages of those contemptible writers.

In this second part of the History of the French Revolution we shall be still more sparing of details than in the first. It was in some degree necessary to lay before the reader the vast multitude of reforms and new institutions which necessarily occupied the constituent assembly without relaxation. It was necessary to shew to posterity the important task which that assembly had to perform, and the numerous obstacles which it had to surmount. The revolutions, which yet remain to be described, contain events of such magnitude and importance as to leave little room for details of an inferior interest. We shall not, therefore, particularise all the changes which have taken place in the administration, still less the marches and counter-marches

of armies, with their various combats, especially such as produced no decisive event. We shall notice only those battles which, by their importance or singularity, deserve to be transmitted to posterity.

Among these numerous changes of ministers, the undoubted symptoms of a versatile and badly-organized government, we cannot pass over in silence the retreat of three truly patriotic ministers, whose integrity and talents could not be suspected; Servan, Rolland, and Clavière. The assembly decreed, that they bore with them the regret of the nation. In the sequel of this history we shall see the tragical end of Rolland and Clavière; for it is a lamentable fact, that the historian of the revolution scarcely mentions any person of importance whose suffering he has not subsequently to relate. Another reflection, no less afflicting, is, that there are few men of purity: Rolland was the creature of Brissot, Servan of Petion. The dismissal of these ministers ascertained more fully the evil intentions of the king, or rather shewed how far he was obliged to yield to the Orleanist faction, whose leaders, the Cordeliers and Jacobins, (for those two societies were not then at variance,) the Marats, the Robespierres, the Dumouriezs, tyrannised

rannised at once over the court and the national assembly.

We must here insert a reflection which had escaped our notice, when we attributed to corruption alone the indulgence shown by the constituent assembly toward the king, on his return from Varennes. The fear of giving too great an ascendancy to the party of d'Orleans contributed not a little to it: and certainly this was a very laudable motive. With regard to this faction, which was one of the greatest that ever existed, which produced almost all the calamities that have afflicted France, and which would have succeeded in all its projects, if the chief which it supported had possessed more energy and courage, the Duke d'Orleans was only its object, and not its true chief. He was a vindictive but cowardly prince, incapable of forming a conspiracy which required genius no less than crime; but he had as counsellors men profoundly vicious. At the head there may be ranked Mirabeau and Laclos, the author of that interesting romance the *Liaisons dangereuses*, a work in which, without intending it, he has delineated his own character. When Robespierre afterwards detached himself from the party of d'Orleans for the purpose of his own elevation, the club of the Cordeliers separated

rated from the Jacobins, and engaged in open contest with them. Danton and the other leaders of the Cordeliers remained attached to the faction of d'Orleans; and this was one cause of Danton's ruin. Petion also joined the Orleanists, after having been of the king's party, for we shall see that the monarch reckoned upon him on the 10th of August. The French revolution has this peculiarity, that it has been directed by several rival factions, no less violently bent upon the destruction of each other, than upon influencing the public opinion in their own favour by every illusion which could deceive or mislead the people, whose interest alone was totally neglected. Thus we shall behold royalism itself borrowing in Vendemiaire the popular language, and preaching the sovereignty of the people, in order to butcher, in their name, the national convention.

We must likewise observe, once for all, that the elements of crime frequently coalesce: the Cordeliers, even after their real disunion from the Jacobins, joined in supporting them against their common enemies. We shall see the royalists and the anarchists, after the 13th of Vendemiaire, and even before, in Prairial, uniting to massacre the convention, and afterwards

afterwards the directory and the members of the legislative body, or to cause partial massacres in the departments. Hence resulted, during the course of the revolution, such an ambiguity in the conduct of each revolutionary movement, that it often presented an inextricable labyrinth to those who had not the clue of Ariadne, that is to say, sufficient discrimination to distinguish the progress of each party. We have exerted ourselves to the utmost to determine the point of contact and the line of separation between the factions with as much precision as is possible in such a chaos. For most of the revolutionary, or rather counter-revolutionary movements were partly royalist, partly Orleanist, (which is another species of royalism,) and partly republican; but all entirely anarchical. In the list of factions we must not omit the constitutionalists. If it appear strange to call the partizans of a constitution factious, it must be remembered, that some men desired the constitution only as a means of attaining pure royalism; others obstinately supported the constitution of 1791, even after the proclamation of the republic, and the establishment of the constitution of 1793. Add to all this, that the same men frequently changed their party: Mirabeau and Petion were successively partizans of d'Orleans and of Louis XVI.

To return to the course of events : Dumouriez succeeded Servan. Whilst Luckner's army was encamped near Lille, and la Fayette's near Maubeuge, the assembly was much astonished at receiving on a sudden a letter from M. de la Fayette, dated the 16th of June 1792. It asserted, that France was in danger, and that it could be saved only by its representatives : then followed a declamation against the clubs, whose abolition he demanded : he advised the assembly to hold themselves firmly attached to the constitution, and to respect the king and the royal authority : he supported certain laws, which he seemed to dictate to the assembly with a kind of menace ; and he added, that his army was of an ardent patriotism ; that it was hostile to licentiousness ; and that it would respect property. " Do you imagine," said Guadet on this occasion, " that Cromwell would have written otherwise to the parliament of Great Britain, when English liberty was destroyed ?" It will soon be seen that la Fayette, as well as Dumouriez who followed his example, was singularly deceived with regard to the disposition of his army. Dumouriez, however, had a much greater degree of talent and military genius than la Fayette.

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We have now reached the period of the too memorable 20th of June, which may be regarded as the prelude of the insurrections which have taken place since, particularly in Germinal and Prairial 1795. The king had, with his usual imprudence, opposed his *veto* to the decree on the banishment of the seditious priests, and on the formation of the camp of 20,000 men near Paris. On the 20th of June, the anniversary of the oath at the Tennis Court, the inhabitants of the Fauxbourgs of Saint Antoine and Saint Marceau defiled through the national assembly, to the number of 15,000 men, all armed with pikes and hatchets. They marched from thence to the palace, and demanded of the king to withdraw his *veto* or suspensive refusal, and to recall the patriotic ministers. The whole passed without any disorder or effusion of blood; but the people, or rather a portion of the people, thus became accustomed to insurrection. Guadet, and the other patriots who supported the admission of these armed petitioners into the midst of the legislative assembly, yielded too much to circumstances: they did not foresee that they would themselves, on the 31st of May following, become victims to similar circumstances.

M. la Fayette, not content with writing his imperious and menacing letter above-mentioned, presented himself on the 29th of June at the bar of the assembly, to demand a prosecution of the instigators of the 20th of June, and to urge the destruction of the Jacobins. A short time afterward the king [informed the assembly, that the King of Prussia was arming against us, and had marched 52,000 men toward our frontiers. If M. la Fayette conducted himself in a cowardly or perfidious manner on the 6th of October, it must be allowed that he acted even with rashness, in appearing before the senate, and it is difficult to conceive why he was not put under arrest: it seems that he must have been supported by a powerful party, or that the Jacobins and Orleanists let slip a very favourable opportunity of destroying their common enemy. Dumouriez had not the same audacity.

Our army had returned to the Camp of Farsars. The legislative body declared, on the 12th of July, that the country was in danger; but this, in the first moments of the revolutionary ardour, was rather an appeal to courage, than a cry of alarm. The assembly, meanwhile, did not neglect the finances. It fixed the contribution on landed property, for the year 1791, at a fifth

fifth of the net revenue: and it had previously ordered the fabrication of assignats of five livres.

Nevertheless, the want of confidence in the king and his ministers, the just suspicions which la Fayette's conduct excited, and the ill-success which at first attended our armies, all together concurred to foment the public discontent. Several sections of Paris, that is to say, the leaders * of several sections, required that the king should be declared to have forfeited the crown. He had already been suspended from the royalty, and the interval between suspension and forfeiture was rendered so much the shorter, by the desire of the Orleanist Jacobins, to place d'Orleans on the throne, and by an equal desire of the true republicans, both in the Jacobin society and in the national assembly, to establish by these means a republic.

This is one of those points of contact in which the most opposite parties naturally agree, though with very different views. In circumstances so favourable to his views, the Duke d'Orleans needed only a common degree of boldness, and a slight spirit of enterprize, to insure to himself success; but he failed in these respects now, as he had on the 6th of October. Meanwhile, his

* The pretended desire of a section is generally that of only a few leaders: men of wisdom and honesty seldom take part in their proceedings.

partizans themselves were embarrassed, and did not well know what answer to give to the royalists, when they said, "If you obtain the decree of forfeiture, what will you substitute in the room of the existing government?" They would not acknowledge that they meant to elevate d'Orleans. It was at this period that the idea of a republic was brought forward; an idea which a great number of pure patriots, among the Jacobins and the affiliated societies, had long entertained. But the ruling party was devoted to d'Orleans. Syeyes published a letter in the *Moniteur*, in which he declares his predilection for monarchy. "I prefer it," said he, "because I am convinced that a citizen possesses more liberty in a monarchy than in a republic." He was, therefore, a royalist. Yet he demanded the deposition of Louis. Whom did he then desire asking? D'O'leans. This is, however, the double-faced man, who assures us that he was never either Orleanist or Robespierriest. He deserves as little credit in this assertion as he does when he assures us that he has been, all his life, a republican, even before the revolution*. Syeyes has

* Syeyes, though a profound thinker, is not much a man of literature. We have heard him in conversation express a contempt for the savouters of English literature. But have we so vast, so inventive a genius, as Bacon? Have we a philosopher comparable to Newton? An Epic poet equal to Milton? &c. &c.

kept behind the curtain whenever there was the least shadow of danger. He always shewed himself when any party appeared to have the upper hand, and always attached himself to that party. More dastardly, more feeble than Barrère, who, at least, accepted a public station, he has, like him, passed through all parties, and has seconded each in its turn.

Never did d'Orleans behold himself so near to the throne. On a sudden a most violent division broke out, as if by miracle, amongst his party. The wicked, says Fenelon, fear the wicked. They dread them still more, when they behold them on the point of attaining real power; they know their profound villany too well to trust them. Barnave put himself at the head of the seceders. It is said that he had been moved with pity, and gained over to the royal party, during the long passage from Varennes to Paris. This new party united themselves to la Fayette and Bailly, to the pretended impartialists or *moderates*, and to the royalists. But the Jacobins, who remained faithful to d'Orleans, did not at first perceive this defection. They discovered it only on the question of judging the king on account of his flight, and when his liberty, his crown, and the education of his son,

were

were restored to him. It was then that the Orleanists, as we have already said, by a seditious petition, occasioned the day of the Champ de Mars. The house of Orleans still possessed a powerful party, the principal supporters of which were Dumouriez, Sillery, Petion, Carra *, Brissot, Marat, Danton, Robespierre, Fauchet, Syeyes, and Manuel.

The day of the 20th of June, in which the popular insurrection had produced only an ineffectual commotion, elevated very much the hopes of the royal party. Danton, who, without possessing the talents of Mirabeau, wished to copy his manners, together with Carra, and some other Orleanists, organized the day of the 10th of August. D'Orleans had promised to make Danton prime-minister, and Petion governor of his son. We shall see, however, by the conduct of the latter, that he was, at the same time, endeavouring to obtain the favour of the royal family. The aim of the insurrection of the 10th of August, as of the 20th of June, was to obtain the declaration of the king's forfeiture of the crown. The republicans, and the Orleanists had this equally in view; but these latter had a secret project besides, or rather a

* Carra afterwards turned to the Duke of Brunswick; Brissot, Fauchet, and Condorcet, became republicans.

project which was generally suspected, and which the events of that day proved. This project was, to massacre the royal family.

The conspirators were to have acted on the 1st of August. Louis XVI., ever since the insurrection of the 20th of June, never slept but in his cloaths, and expected every night to be assassinated. The conspirators were obliged to postpone their undertaking till the 10th of August, on account of the intended arrival of a great number of pretended *Marseillais*, that is to say, of banditti, and even of some misled patriots of the south. On the 7th, Sillery took a lodging in the Faubourg Saint Antoine, to be at hand to stir up the people. The fermentation at Paris was extreme: it was said that the king had collected a number of Swiss guards to murder the patriots, and that he had a quantity of arms concealed in the palace. The inner apartments had been visited, and found to be only filled with boxes ready packed for a journey; but the official account of this inspection did not allay the general suspicion.

Louis XVI. passed the whole night of the 9th awake, listening to the terrific sound of the tocsin and of the generale, which had continually re-echoed, ever since midnight, from several sections.

tions. He had with him four hundred persons, armed with swords and pistols, and determined to shed the last drop of their blood in his defence. A part of the regiment of Swiss guards had been placed in the court of the palace: the remainder were at Courbevoie, which proves that their object was not attack, but defence. It is certain that there were no cannon in the palace, which had been already visited by the magistrates of the people: or, at least, it is certain, if there were any, that they were not used. The Swiss guards were not all together above nine hundred. The king, in order to avoid being suspected of aggression *, had collected around him several members of the administrative bodies. He had sent for Petion, at that time mayor, to come to the palace. At the sound of the tocsin, the Bretons and the Marseillois, who had either remained in Paris since the federation of 14th of July, or had newly arrived from the south, put themselves at the head of this insurrection. They

* We shall hereafter see that the *foi-disant* patriotic journals spoke of cannon fired, and masked batteries: there was only a rolling fire of some minutes on the part of the Swiss guards, whether in return for being first fired upon, or through an excess of zeal in their duty, or in consequence of secret orders by the court, is what has never been fully ascertained: and even if those orders existed, the king was probably unacquainted with them.

were a mixture of the men hired by d'Orleans, and of violent republicans, who knew not the designs of the Orleanists. A number of citizens in arms repaired to the square of the *Maison-Commune*, where the council-general was assembled. Petion did not return from the palace; and his absence caused great uneasiness. Several groups went from hence to the national assembly, where some of the members, awakened by the sound of the tocsin, had already taken their seats, and sent for the other deputies. As Petion did not return from the palace, and as the number requisite to open the sitting was complete, the tribunes demanded and obtained a decree, obliging the king to permit Petion, who, they thought, was retained by force, to return. The mayor, at length, appeared at the bar, and was conducted from thence to the Hotel-de-Ville, where the assemblies of the sections that were in motion decreed, that he should be kept in the council-hall, with an honorary guard of four hundred citizens, who should answer for his life. Santerre was named commander in chief of the national guards of Paris, in the place of one Mandat, who had grossly insulted Petion in his way from the Thuilleries to the national assembly. Mandat was committed to prison. The Etat-major of the national guard was reorganized,

ized, and the former municipal body and council-general of the commune were renewed, with the exception of the mayor, and of Manuel, procurator of the commune. Meanwhile, the insurrection became general. The battalions advanced in order, with the cannon at their head. The court did not wait for the assemblage to be complete. It is believed to be Rœderer, the procurator-general syndic of the department, who, on that day, saved the lives of Louis XVI. and the royal family, by advising them to take refuge in the midst of the legislative body. This measure prevented a great crime, and disconcerted a part of the projects of the Orleanists.

Meanwhile, the national assembly, upon a report presented by Vergniaud, hastened to decree the suspension of Louis XVI. A report had been spread that the decree of forfeiture had passed by acclamation; this was not the fact, he was only suspended. Louis himself assisted, if we may so say, at the deliberation on this decree, which was not long, sitting with his family in the box appointed for the short-hand writers. On a sudden, several cannon shot are heard, together with cries on all sides of "We are betrayed. To arms! The Swiss are firing on the citizens: they have already killed a hundred
"Marseillois."

“ Marseillois.” The combat had, in fact, been begun about ten o’clock in the morning. It is not easy to ascertain exactly its origin : according to the *soi-disant* patriotic journals of that time, the Swiss guards received the Marseillois and Parisians with apparent kindness, and afterwards assailed them with a rolling fire from the right and left, and even from the palace windows, followed by a discharge of cannon, masked and loaded with grape-shot. This account is the more improbable, as there perished only a thousand Parisians in this engagement, and as the Marseillois, who were in the front, lost only two hundred men. Louis XVI. was not the aggressor, since it was the faction of d’Orleans that directed this insurrection, as it had that of the 20th of June. But it is also probable that the court had given orders to fire upon the people, if they should advance. A good prince would have taken refuge with the assembly, as Louis XVI. did ; but he would, at the same time, have ordered the Swiss to retreat from the Parisians, or to lay down their arms before them. But it was thought that such a lesson would make the people disgusted with insurrections. The court thought themselves the strongest, and were desirous of revenge. In this case they must

must have acted in a very dastardly manner, not to have put themselves at the head of the combatants. When Charles IX. fired on the protestants with an arquebuss, he, at least, exposed himself to the hazard of resistance. The cavalry of the national guard galloped up impetuously, and set fire to the quarters of the Swiss guards. Forty horses and twenty-five horsemen were left dead on the spot. The pikes, mixed with the bayonets, were of great service. The Swiss had cannon; but that of the Parisians, which was very well served, swept down a great number of the enemy. The carnage became horrible in the interior of the castle: and the Parisians displayed no less rage and cruelty in their triumph, than courage and energy in the combat. It is true, that amongst this immense multitude, there were a great number of banditti from other parts hired by d'Orleans: and moreover, the populace is always the populace, that is to say, is always an animal, gentle when at rest, but savagely ferocious when irritated. The vestibule of the palace, the great stair-case, the chapel, all the anti-chambers and corridors, the hall of the throne, and that of the council, filled with immense crowds of people, were stained with the blood of the Swiss guards and of the king's servants, and heaped with their dead bodies.

dies. The popular vengeance was exhibited in all its horror. An abbé, preceptor to the son of Louis XVI., had, with an heroic generosity, concealed eight Swiss guards in a large wardrobe belonging to his apartments, with the certainty of sharing with them a cruel death if they should be discovered. He was butchered without mercy. M. de Clermont Tonnerre was seized, and massacred in the rue de Séves.

The people did not spare one of the inhabitants of the palace. From the chief officers of the household to the lowest scullion, all were put to death. The very cellars were searched, and in them were found many thousands of torches, which it was presumed were intended to set fire to Paris, if the court had gained the advantage. Sixty Swiss guards were condemned by martial law, and executed in the square of the Hotel-de-Ville. The rage of the people was carried so far, as to murder the Swiss porters at the gates.

In this vast assemblage of citizens there were men of virtue, of humanity, and integrity; but their voices could not be heard. Several letters of M. de la Fayette's were found in the palace, which were not much to his credit.

How terrible a picture did Paris, at that time, present to view, especially at the scene of action! An insurrection directed by an infamous faction, and supported by well-meaning, but mistaken citizens! The chiefs of the insurrection, d'Orleans, Petion, Robespierre, Danton, keeping themselves at a distance from the danger! A court resolved not to attack, but to punish an attack with the blood of the citizens; and this same court also concealing themselves during the massacre! What a picture too did this day present, of carcasses piled on carcasses! The next day beheld a renewal of these horrors. The people hurried to the prisons of the Abbaye, to sacrifice d'Affri, colonel of the Swiss guards, who had been confined there, as a mean of delivering him from the fury of the populace. All the Swiss that were met with the next day were massacred with a cool and determined barbarity which nothing can excuse. This day of the 10th of August, notwithstanding so many atrocities, ought to be for ever dear to the republicans, since it was the day which overthrew the throne; it is also immortalised by the valour of the Parisians and the Marseillois. At length, d'Orleans having failed in his project of assassinating the royal family, as he had on the preceeding 20th of June, and on the 5th and 6th of

of October, by degrees lost all his credit. Vice, when unsuccessful, disgusts even its own partizans. In order to strengthen the Orleanist party, and to depress its enemies by terror, Danton, Petion, Marat, and Manuel, organized the butchery of the 2d of September. The legislative assembly, without intending it, gave, in some measure, the signal of this carnage, by decreeing, that domiciliary visits should be made. These visits were made in the night; the persons marked out by the faction were seized, and the prisons were crowded with them. Manuel, in the interval previous to the massacre, went every day to reckon those wretched victims. If any one of them wrote to this savage monster, or to the tiger Petion, he received this answer of atrocious ambiguity: *You will be released on the 2d of September.* On that day the assassinations, in fact, began. There was established, in the interior of each prison, a sort of tribunal, which delivered the victims to their executioners. In the palace of justice there was another tribunal of blood, consisting of Robespierre, Coffinhal, Lullier, Real, and others, which influenced the sentences delivered by the particular tribunals. There was formed besides a committee, to which they recurred when it appeared doubtful whether a prisoner was or was not an Anti-Orleanist. This

infamous committee had, alternately, as its presidents, Marat, Sergent, and Panis, brother-in-law to Santerre. Danton sent emissaries to Lyons, Meaux, and Rheims; letters were dispatched to the departments, in several of which blood was shed at the same moment and in the same manner. We shall have occasion to recur to these massacres, which posterity will not be able to believe; they were the prelude of those which have since been committed, and it is not easy to say which were the most atrocious.

Some persons purchased their lives by means of money. Manuel had a kind of fairness in his villany; he kept his promises faithfully, and released those prisoners whose ransom he had received. He was paid fifty thousand crowns for that of the princess de Lamballe, and he immediately took measures for setting her at liberty; but here his genius was inferior to that of d'Orleans. That prince had a rooted hatred to the unfortunate Lamballe, either because she was the confidante and intimate friend of the queen, or because she had, ever since the 5th of October 1789, positively refused all communication with the Duke of Orleans: besides, this prince gained, by her death, a jointure of a hundred thousand crowns, which was paid her out of the fortune

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tune of her sister-in-law, the Duchess of Orleans. The duke being informed of the agreement which had been made with Manuel, immediately dispatched a band of assassins to the Hotel-de-Force, where she was confined. An Italian, named Rotondo, who, for the last two years, had lived in the greatest intimacy with the duke, put himself at the head of the assassins, who made the princess lose her life in long and excruciating tortures.

Verfailles, like Paris, was dyed with blood. Thither were sent the prisoners confined at Orleans, under pretence that the judges of the latter place were royalists, and would not proceed to try them. They were massacred in the wag-gons which brought them: and those cannibal banquets were renewed, of which our revolution has afforded but too many examples: these savages devoured the palpitating flesh half roasted on the coals. Manuel, from that instant, declared an eternal enmity to d'Orleans. It is impossible that a solid union should subsist between scoundrels.

The conduct of M. de la Fayette toward his army, together with his letters found at the Thuilleries, left no doubt of his perfidy; but he
escaped

escaped the decree of accusation passed against him, by emigrating with his Etat-major, as soon as he found that the army would not second his views. The Prussians, to whom he fled for refuge, confined him, by order of the king of Prussia, in a fortress belonging to the emperor, who has kept him in confinement during the last four years, a merited punishment for his ambition and perfidy, in deceiving both the legislative body and the king. It is now apparent that he was informed of Louis's flight to Varennes, and that he connived at his escape, in order to make a merit of his arrest. This is proved by two simple considerations; first, that he had only dispatched couriers after him on that particular road; and secondly, that the king was so guarded and watched as to have been unable to escape without the consent of M. la Fayette. Drouet, who pretended that he recognised the king at Varennes from his similitude to the portrait engraved on an assignat of 50 livres, had probably received previous instructions from la Fayette. Finally, his imprisonment in Prussia is a just punishment for his conduct pending the first dangers in which the royal family were involved during the night of the 5th of October. The first words which the king addressed to la Fayette after the massacre of the 6th, were this remarkable

remarkable expression: "*Had I been in your place, I should not have slept.*" It has even been said, that M. la Fayette advised the king's flight to Varennes, in order to make him accept the constitution with sincerity, when he should perceive the general wish of the French nation, and the impossibility of escaping from the kingdom. If M. de la Fayette gave this advice, he was also desirous to get rid of Monsieur, the king's brother. And, indeed, he was not pursued. Monsieur had no friendship or esteem for la Fayette, and ever since the revolution the advice of Monsieur had the greatest weight with Louis XVI.

Besides several letters of M. de la Fayette, various other papers were found at the palace, addressed to the king, respecting the conduct necessary for him to pursue in order to crush the patriots, who were at that time confounded with the Jacobin and Orleanist party. There was also a note in which the initials of the name of Louis's brothers were perfectly recognised: this note proved the existence of a regular correspondence between the three brothers. Another note was from the minister Delessart, and signed in the margin by the king: it is a plan

concerted by the ministers with Barnave and Alexander Lameth. We have given an account of it: the assembly immediately decreed their accusation.

The combined armies continued to advance into our territory, and if they failed before Thionville, whose fidelity and honourable resistance France will never forget, they succeeded in obtaining possession of Verdun, which had imitated the perfidy of the inhabitants of Longwy, and, like them, opened its gates to the Prussians. Its governor, the immortal Beaurepaire, was so indignant at this cowardly proceeding, that he shot himself in the midst of the council upon their taking the infamous resolution of yielding. The assembly decreed him the honours of the Pantheon.

The royal family was confined in the prison of the Temple after the day of the 10th of August. It is very astonishing, as we have already remarked, that the Jacobins or Orleanists, though they were so often placed in circumstances the most favourable for their enterprise, were nevertheless unable to effect a change of the dynasty. It was because they had no unanimity, because
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the cowardice of the Duke of Orleans, and the universal contempt into which he had fallen, checked the eagerness of his most violent partisans, since they could not but perceive, that, if he were openly proclaimed king, regent, lieutenant-general, or protector, the whole mass of the nation would revolt against such a choice ; finally, it was because they feared, on their own account, the wickedness and perfidy of the Duke of Orleans, and rather wished to throw the state into confusion, that, during the anarchy, they might themselves gain the ascendancy, than to give themselves so dangerous a master. Besides, the generality of these conspirators were no less cowardly than ferocious: they set the people in motion, and remained concealed themselves: it was natural, that in such circumstances the people would not go so far as they wished. Robespierre and Danton did not appear during the business of the 10th of August: Petion caused himself to be guarded; and yet each of these cowards had the impudence to boast in the tribune of having been at the head of the Parisians on the 10th of August: and what is not less surprising, no member of the assembly exposed the falsehood of these assertions. We have already said that Manuel vowed an eternal hatred to d'Orleans. The Abbé Fauchet also

left this party, and wrote a journal against it. The remainder of the Jacobins divided themselves in a similar manner: but we will not anticipate the events of the third national assembly.

The legislature finding its powers not adequate to the magnitude of the circumstances in which it was placed, and, moreover, feeling that it had no longer the public opinion in its favour, gave place to the convention. It appears that the money of the civil list had gained over a great number of the members of this assembly as well as of the former. It is also probable that the ancient prejudice in favour of royalty, and the more laudable desire of not advancing d'Orleans nearer to the throne, induced this assembly to lay down a burthen which had become too weighty for it.

The legislative assembly may be reproached with having imitated the constituent body in those measures of persecution which tend so much to excite fanaticism. With regard to the colonial affairs it was much less versatile in its principles than the constituent assembly, which caused many of the sufferings of the colonists,
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by favouring them too much, and by flattering the hope which they entertained of enslaving and oppressing the men of colour. The colonists fell into the same error which was the ruin of the French nobility; they opposed an impolitic resistance to the demands of the men of colour in their first and most moderate stage. We shall hereafter return to this interesting subject.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

by favouring them too much, and by fostering the hope which they entertained of conquering and oppressing the men of colour. The mistake fell into the same error which was the ruin of the French nobility; they opposed an unjust resistance to the demands of the men of colour in their just and most moderate claims. We shall hereafter return to this interesting subject.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

